THE UNFOLDING LIFE

ANTOINETTE ABERNETHY LAMOREAUX

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THE UNFOLDING LIFE

THE UNFOLDING LIFE

A STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT

WITH REFERENCE TO

RELIGIOUS TRAINING

BY

ANTOINETTE ABERNETHY LAMOREAUX

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

MARION LAWRANCE

THE RELIGIOUS PUBLISHING COMPANY
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TO

My Precious Father and Mother,

in whose daily ministry

I have seen the beauty and learned the meaning

of Christian Nurture,

this book is affectionately dedicated.

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INTRODUCTION

HAVING read with much care the proof sheets of this book, I am prepared to say three things about it, and it gives me pleasure to say them here.

1. THE BOOK IS WELL NAMED, "THE UNFOLDING LIFE." Turn which way we will, we see life unfolding all about us, and yet how faintly are its mysteries understood! And is it not the one thing above all others, which teachers, mothers, fathers and all of us, need to understand? It is well that our attention has been called to this most vital of all themes by a book, whose very name compels attention to its content, and whose content is but its name in fuller treatment.

2. THE BOOK IS WELL WRITTEN. Such books as this should be read slowly and pondered well; but this book by its fascination will tempt one to read too rapidly. Its line of argument is logical; its diction is as pure as the bubbling

stream; its truths are evident and compelling. It presents the purest psychology stripped of all mystifying technicalities, and clothed in language which even a child can understand. The reason for this is plain. It is the "Beaten Oil" drawn from the rich and ripe experience of one of the best students of childhood and teachers of children in our land.

3. THE BOOK IS WELL TIMED. Teachers are seeking now as never before to understand the soil in which the living seed of God's Word is to be cast. Nothing can be more important than this. The author deals largely with the every day problems of the average home and Sunday School, thus rendering the highest service to the great army of ordinary teachers and mothers. While this book will be hailed with joy by all such, it will nevertheless command a place by the side of the highest grade books on the subject. There never was a time when any book on any subject was more greatly needed than this book is needed now. It would be a boon indeed to

every home, and to every Sunday School as well, if all teachers, mothers, yes, and fathers too, would read and re-read "THE UNFOLDING LIFE."

MARION LAWRANCE.

Chicago, March, 1908.

FOREWORD

THE greatest thing in the world is a human life. The greatest work in the world is the helpful touch upon that life. Here and there an artist in soul culture is found at the task, but the many are unskilled and the product of the labor is far from a manhood "perfect in Christ."

In dealing with things, the vessel marred in the making can be set aside or fashioned anew, but a life is for eternity. The faulty work can not be undone. The mistake can never be wholly rectified, for life never yields up what is given it. The look, the word, the invisible atmosphere of the home and church, the sights and sounds of all the busy days enter the super-sensitive and retentive soul of the child and are woven into life tissue. Character has no other from which to fashion itself. Therefore its final beauty and worth will be determined

in large measure by the quality of the material which entered in.

It is with earnest desire to help some parent or teacher in the divine work of soul nurture, that this volume is offered. There is no attempt to add to knowledge in Child Study or Psychology, but rather to interpret certain of their fundamental facts and principles with reference to Religious Training.

CHAPTER I

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT.

Row upon row they stretched, fifteen acres of regal chrysanthemums, roses pink, yellow, white and red, fragile lilies of the valley, carnations and vivid orchids, no two alike, yet all expressions of plant life. Skilled gardeners from England and Germany were busy with these exquisite flower children, watering, pruning and training upon slender cords, that every bud might come to perfect unfolding. The laws of the plant world and the law of each individual flower were well known to them. They knew that all required sunshine and soil, warmth and moisture, but in varying amount. The chrysanthemums grew in the sunlight, while only a few days before cutting could the lilies of the valley be released from their darkened beds. All needed cultivation but not in thc same way. Some were massed, while yonder were

thousands of carnations, and every one sole monarch of its own little garden plot. Painstakingly and completely, day after day, the needs of each frail life were met, until the flowers grown in this greatest of Canadian greenhouses have become renowned far across the border for their unsurpassed beauty, coloring and size.

The quiet walk between the glorious masses of bloom that October afternoon brought a vision of a greater Child garden, with an infinite variety of human plants to be tended, every one with its own individuality, needs, possibilities and a divine purpose for it cherished in the heart of the Heavenly Gardener. The work of nurture He has given to parents and teachers, longing unspeakably that it shall be so wise and tender that His plan for every life may be realized.

But as the earnest soul takes up the task, it seems so bewildering. "Three little ones in the home, and every one different! Ten boys in the Sunday School class and no two alike! Where does nurture begin? How is it carried on?"

Though the differences in human lives are countless, there are certain great likenesses. All have life, needs, possibilities; they all grow and develop in the same general way. From these common likenesses have been formulated a few principles which are as helpful to a child gardener as a knowledge of the laws of plant life to one who nurtures roses and carnations. Their understanding is not dependent upon physical parenthood. God will interpret the meaning to any one whom He calls into fellowship with Himself in the matchless work of soul culture.

I. The First Principle deals with the nature of life—What is it? Some answer must be given in order to arrive at an aim, a method, and an inspiration for work. If a child is only a beautiful figure upon which to display dainty garments, the mother has a plain pathway marked out for her. If a boy is a capacity to be filled, or a machine to grind out facts or dollars, the teacher's course of action is clear.

God's conception of life is surely great-

er than these, yet He never gave a definition. Jesus said it is more than meat, that it is worth more than all the world, that it does not consist in abundance of things, that it is eternal, but He nowhere tells us what it is, for He can not. It is a part of God. He can only make us understand it in any wise by giving its characteristics and values. Perhaps these may come to us more clearly through considering first what life is not.

1. Life is not merely "plastic clay" to be moulded, or a "block of marble" to be hewn according to the will of the sculptor.

This poetic conception emphasizes rightly the tremendous power of environment and personality in shaping character, but it is really a dangerous half truth. If the child were a block of marble, he would be no different from the dead, inert lump that lies in the studio awaiting the will of the sculptor. They would both be things. But a child has life, and the difference between life and thing lies in an inner power or activity which life possesses and uses when and as it will.

This activity has to be reckoned with. Sun and rain and earth can not make a plant grow if it does not use its own mysterious inner force upon them. No sort of influence can affect a life, if the life does not respond to it. This response will be either receiving or rejecting the influences that come, working with or against them. Assuredly this is a condition very different from "plastic clay." Two great tasks, therefore, are included in the work of nurture: the first, to see that all that comes to plastic life from the outside is what it ought to be; the second, to somehow arouse the power within to vigorous effort upon the best things.

2. Life is not a "pure white page," even in its beginning.

There is here also a half truth, and an error. Life is unstained by guilt in its early years. It comes innocent from the hand of God, but fingers long since vanished have traced lines that mar the perfect whiteness. There are tendencies away from God as well as toward Him, and these are not the result of environment. Environment will cultivate tend-

encies but can not implant them. Favoring conditions will make an apple tree produce magnificent apples, but they will never implant in it any tendency to bear roses or produce thorns. Failure to recognize the fact of two sets of tendencies in the life will lead to a fatal mistake in nurture. Christ will be presented only as an Example and not as a Savior also, thus setting before a life its pattern and leaving it impotent to reach it.

3. A life in its beginning is not a "little man."

The element of truth in this conception is perhaps less than in either of these preceding. It is indeed true that child life is that out of which man life is to come, but the difference is more vital than that of inches or strength. The bulb shelters a lily life, but the difference is greater than size. The chrysalis will bring forth the butterfly, but the two are not identical. Childhood will unfold into manhood, but each has its own characteristics and needs, differing in largest degree.

The physiologist tells us that it would be hard to find many important points

beyond the most fundamental laws in which the infant and the adult exactly resemble each other. (Oppenheim.) In bodily proportions, in actual composition of bones, muscles, blood and nerves, in size and development of the organs, the differences are wide.

The psychologist proves that there is equal variance in mental conditions. The man has a sense of responsibility to his neighbor and to God, unknown to child life. He thinks and reasons and judges as the child mind can not. His whole outlook upon life is opposite from that of the child.

We recognize this difference in caring for the body, and the babe is fed on milk and the boy on meat. But the difference must be recognized as equally important in caring for the soul. Just as meat is meat, whether minced or uncut, and therefore unsuited for a tiny life, so doctrine is doctrine, whether stated in words of one syllable or four, and equally unsuited to a beginning life. Paul refers to those who need milk and not solid food, spiritually, because they are "without

experience of the word of righteousness," clearly indicating a difference in the kind of instruction, not the amount. The subject matter must be adapted to the life, not merely the number of syllables, the method of teaching, as well as the length of the lesson. Without this careful adaptation of food and method, the developing life will be under-nourished, and the most vigorous maturity be impossible.

But these negative statements only safeguard against mistakes by telling us what to avoid. A real working basis must be found in a positive principle.

The study of an unfolding life at any time in its development always reveals two supreme facts, possibilities peculiar to that period, and self activity. The First Principle of development combines these two facts and gives us our nearest approach to a definition.

"Life is a bundle of possibilities and self activity."

The block of marble has possibilities, so has molten metal and a tube of paint; but life has possibilities plus inner

power. The three imperative "Oughts" for the parent or teacher are herein suggested.

First, he ought to be able to recognize each possibility as it appears.

Second, he ought to know how best to deal with it.

Third, he ought to know how to stimulate the activity to greatest endeavor.

II. The Second Principle states the relation of nurture to the unfolding of these possibilities.

"The direction and degree of development are largely determined by nurture."

Every possibility in a life, unless it die out, must develop either upward or downward, toward the best or worst. This development, whether in a plant or a boy, depends on what is given the life to work with and the use that is made of it, or, stated in more dignified terms—the development is a result of influences that come to a life and the response made to them by activity. The sort of influences and the sort of response given will determine the sort of development. When some one is consciously endeavoring to

make both outer influences and the inner working of the life the best possible, it is called nurture.

The responsibility that grows out of this thought of nurture is almost crushing, yet its opportunity is sublime. To make a boy strong for his life work, because the right word was spoken at the critical moment, the encouragement given just when his purpose was faltering, to help a girl reach glorious young womanhood because the inspiration came as she stood at the parting of the ways—surely this, in a very real sense, is working with God. The story of almost every life of marked power, reveals a human touch at the cross roads. Is this one meaning in the Master's words, "Inasmuch as ye did it," or "Inasmuch as ye did it not?" "I would have been on the foreign mission field seven years ago," said a splendid young man, "had not my Sunday School teacher laughed at me when I told him my new born desire. I expect to go now, but what of those seven years?"

If the home and the church should be-

gin at once to obey God's command to nurture the children "In the chastening and admonition of the Lord," with all that means, the next generation would see the kingdoms of this world given to Christ and the advent of the King.

III. The Third Principle defines the work of nurture.

"Nurture must care for both nourishment and activity."

1. The Watch Care over Nourishment.

Nourishment is the general term for all that upon which the life feeds. It is given both consciously and unconsciously and is absorbed in like manner, but in its effect upon the life, the unconscious nourishment has greater power.

(1) Unconscious Nourishment.

(a) The first factor in unconscious nourishment is personality.

Just as truly as the physical life is nourished by life, so is the mental and the spiritual. Standards of living, ideas, a sense of values, opinions, do not come from text-books but fathers and mothers. The lesson from the printed page may fail to gain entrance, but the lesson from

the teacher's life, never. This explains the success of many a humble mother and the failure of many an intellectual teacher. It is at the very heart of all work for another.

Its first message is a personal one. It tells the worker that his life is more compelling than his voice; that the Word must again become flesh to give it authority. It tells him further that if he is to be the bread of life to growing souls, his own pasturage must not be things, but in reality, the living Christ.

The other message applies to his work. While every life that touches his will always carry away something from the contact, the most helpful human life can never suffice for another's nourishment. Each soul needs the complete Christ for itself. The amazing thing among parents and teachers is their unconcern over His absence from the lives of the children. Years pass, and precept, lesson and admonition are given, while Christ, the Life, is not definitely and personally offered. "According to their pasture so were they filled." Is not this the explanation of so many meagre lives?

(b) The second factor of unconscious nourishment is environment with its subtle atmosphere.

The importance of environment is found in this great law, that life tends to become like that which is around it. So strong is the tendency that the only escape from conformity lies in real struggle. This a little child rarely puts forth, and an adult not always, for it is far easier to follow the line of least resistance and "be like other people."

Growing out of this power of environment comes the problem of all philanthropic and religious work—how to overcome the influence of harmful surroundings. The need is obvious when the surroundings are vicious, yet the home does not need to be in the slums to injure a growing life. It only needs to be Christless. This may seem a very radical statement, but it is nevertheless true. Arresting the highest development is as truly an injury as giving to life wrong direction. Has not a plant been positively injured when its most beautiful possibilities are unrealized because of unfavoring con-

ditions? Is not a body, undersized and stunted because of lack of fresh air and food, as truly deformed as though the back were bent? Has not that soul received the most cruel of all injuries, when its divinest possibilities can never be attained either because of spiritual starvation or misdirection? The Church and the Sunday School attempt to furnish a counteracting environment, but it is infrequent and brief. The only power which can render this temporary, religious environment more effective in influencing character than a harmful, permanent one, is the Divine. A church building or a Sunday School session of itself, can accomplish little, placed over against a home. Methods of grading and forms of worship are impotent in themselves. It is only a living Christ, actually vitalizing the lesson and the sermon and the plan of work Who makes them efficacious.

If this be so, then the teacher who goes to the home itself to press the claims of a personal Savior on the father and mother, has after all reached the heart of the problem of environment.

(c) The third factor of unconscious nourishment is the Superhuman Power.

This thought has been suggested in connection with personality and environment, but it demands separate emphasis. It is not an easy thing in the stress of the visible to remember the greater power of the Invisible. The most earnest Christian worker is sometimes overwhelmed by discouragement or, again, unduly confident because of the perfection of system and method, forgetting that God knows no obstacle, and that He alone can put life into a plan of work.

But though God uses men and methods, He does not always so approach a life. He deals directly with a soul through the influence of the Holy Spirit, and life receives its most holy nurture in those sacred hours. Therefore, the highest service permitted a Sunday School teacher is to pray effectually for the brooding Spirit to rest upon the pupils in his class. The mother can do nothing which shall mean so much for the precious life in her arms as learning, herself, the secret of prevailing prayer, for, "If we ask anything

according to His Will, He heareth us; and if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him." Therefore, O Lord, "Teach us to pray."

(2) Conscious Nourishment.

This is definite instruction so given to a life that it is appropriated. A large part of attempted instruction is never taken in. "I have told you over and over again," says the despairing mother, but telling does not always involve receiving. Placing nourishing food before the boy does not necessarily mean stronger muscle and purer blood. He must eat and digest it. Teaching, to be nourishment, requires first, careful adaptation of the subject matter, then presentation in such a way that the mind will voluntarily reach out, lay hold upon and assimilate it. God again gives the key to real teaching in the word "engraft." Its process in the physical and mental world is identical. First, the delicate adjustment, then a vital union, and lastly, new life resulting.

2. The Watch Care over Activity.

We have considered nurture in its work

of supplying the best nourishment to growing souls, and now its care for activity must be noted. Since the subject will be discussed more fully in a succeeding chapter, only the necessity for the nurture will be considered here. This necessity appears in the four-fold result of activity.

(1) New Experiences.

This is the first result to the child from ceaseless movement of hands and feet and eager eyes. In early life he is not conscious of seeking the new experience, he only wants to be in motion. In later life, energy is definitely put forth for some desired end. But whatever the motive, experiences helpful or harmful, according to the sort of activity, result, and they enter character at par value.

(2) Growth or Increase in Size.

Activity is necessary before anything given to the body or the soul can become a part of life. Food must be acted upon by the digestive, circulatory and assimilative organs to make it bone and muscle and nerve. The mind must think upon the fact in order to add it to the store of

knowledge. The heavenly vision must be obeyed before Christian experience is enlarged by it.

But there is another aspect of this same thought. Just as truly as activity must precede assimilation, so truly does assimilation follow activity. It may be stated more simply in this way. Nothing can become a part of the life until it has been acted upon; when it has been acted upon it can not be taken out of the life. When digestion is finished and the food is bone and muscle, it can not be withdrawn. When the idea has been thought in or acted upon, it has by that process become a part of the life, and though it may fade from memory its influence is abiding.

(3) Development or Increase of Power and Skill.

Every muscle exercised gains greater freedom. Every knotty problem mastered means increased mental ability. Every victory means greater power in resisting temptation. Whatever the action, whether good or bad, helpful or harmful, greater skill and power in that direction follows it.

This other very important fact needs to be clear, that no amount of energy put forth for another will mean development for him. He must exercise his own arm for strength and solve his own problem. Development only comes through the effort of each individual for himself; hence the best teacher is the one who can rouse the pupil to the greatest endeavor.

(4) Habit Formation.

It is impossible to act, physically, mentally or spiritually, without making it easier to repeat the action, and soon ease passes to tendency, then tendency to compulsion, and life is in the grip of a habit. This is the inevitable outcome of activity, until "nine-tenths of life is lived in the mould of habit."

If it be true that habit is "ten times second nature," the importance of directing activity toward the formation of right habits needs no discussion.

IV. The Fourth Principle of unfolding life deals with its crises. "The crucial points in development are those times when new possibilities begin to unfold."

The life comes from God complete in its possibilities, but at the beginning all is in germ. As life progresses, development of these possibilities proceeds, but it is not uniform. The body acquires ability to control the larger muscles before it can adjust the finer and more complex ones, as instanced in the child's ability to walk before he can thread a needle. The mind is able to imagine before it can reason clearly. The feelings center on self before they reach out to the world around. As every new possibility begins to develop, two serious facts must be remembered:

(1) Direction must be given in the beginning before tendencies are fixed.

A beginning is always a time of easy adjustment and flexibility. Business corporations can readily alter a course of action before a policy has been established. The nurseryman can easily secure the straight trunk of the mature tree in the yielding sapling. The law is just as true when it touches human life. The trend of any possibility is determined largely in the beginning of its unfolding.

After that time has gone by, conditions are practically fixed, and he that is unjust will be unjust still, and he that is holy will be holy still.

(2) Future strength and vigor are largely determined in the beginning of development.

It is well nigh impossible to overcome the effect of early neglect. If the culture of the growing stalk is passed over, the corn in the ear can not be full. If the bodily needs of the boy are unmet, he can not reach his full development as a man. If his budding intellectual life, his awakening feeling life, or the delicate unfolding of his spiritual life is neglected, a complete, rounded out maturity is impossible. A starved childhood is always the prophecy of a stunted manhood, while life nourished in its beginning foretells vigorous maturity.

V. The very important question now arises, "How may these crucial times be recognized?" The answer is given in the Fifth Principle. "A new interest always accompanies an awakening possibility."

The increasing love of a story discloses

a growing imagination. The passionate hero worship of a boy's heart reveals the fact of a budding ideal. The interest in clubs and desire for companionship tell of awakening social feelings. Life is always the exponent of its own need to one who cares to know, and it further reveals what should be given it, and how.

VI. The Sixth Principle has already been touched upon in the preceding discussion, but it needs the emphasis of special statement, because of its importance. "Development is from within, out, through what is absorbed, not from without, in, through external application without absorption."

If development were a matter of external application, the post would grow and the stone and the stick, because they have earth and air and moisture around them. If it came from without, in, the most admonished child would be the best, the most talked to pupil the wisest, but the reverse is usually true. That which adheres simply to the surface of rock and child is veneer, which the testing circumstance will rub off. Only that which

is assimilated is of any value to the life.

These are the great principles revealed in the development of life from infancy to maturity. The factor of human contact appears in every one. The question, "What is my touch upon this unfolding life?" can not be evaded. The stone-cutter takes the marble and hews out the rough block; the sculptor finds its hidden soul. The artisan takes the canvas and the common sign appears; the artist makes it immortal. But God gives life to parents and teachers to fashion. Will hands clumsy and unskilled, miss the perfect beauty, or the touch of master workmanship bring forth a likeness to the Christ?

CHAPTER II

EARLY CHILDHOOD

THE first period of life, Early Childhood, includes the years from birth to about six or, in Sunday School phraseology, the "Cradle Roll," from birth to three, and the "Beginners," from three to six.

It is a temptation to note at length the marvelous achievements of a little life in its earliest years, as it comes,

"Out from the shore of the great unknown,
Blind and wailing and alone,
Into the light of day.

* * * * * *

From the unknown sea that reels and rolls,
Specked with the barks of little souls,
Barks that were launched on the other side,
And slipped from Heaven on an ebbing tide."

The wealth of material, however, clustering around each period of developing life is so great that selection must be made. Therefore only those facts illu-

minating the chosen theme of religious nurture will be considered.

The baby's world is a "big, blooming, buzzing confusion," according to James, but gradually, cosmos emerges from chaos. The senses, clouded at first, become clear and active. Adjustment and voluntary control of the larger muscles are secured. The art of walking is mastered, and the great feat of learning a language practically unaided, is well under way. The awakening mind learns to know certain objects and simplest relationships within a very limited sphere, and through ceaseless activity, new experiences are constantly coming in to the soul.

Guided by instinct and impulse, responding to any wind that blows, sensitive and retentive as the plate of a camera,

> "Just a-yearning
> To be learning
> Anything at all,"

can any religious nurture be given to this tiny little bundle of possibilities?

Manifestly, it will not be through precept and admonition, for they are meaningless, yet never will life be more open to the influences of impression and atmosphere than at this time. The child can not understand their import as they come, but he will feel them. He does not understand love, but he feels it. He can not comprehend personality, but his restless little body grows quiet in the tender arms of a strong father. He responds to the fretfulness or gentleness of the mother, the noisy confusion or peace of the home. These multitudinous impressions become his life, though he can not grasp their meaning.

Just as surely does he drink in impressions which have the Divine element. What they speak to him only God knows, but some message is theirs. The picture of the "Good Shepherd," of "Jesus Blessing Little Children," of the "Madonna and Child," perform their silent ministry to his soul. He is peculiarly sensitive to the reverence and worship in lofty music. In the evening tide of a Sabbath day, a father was seated at the piano,

while the two older children stood near, and a wee one of two and a half years listened from his mother's arms. The songs used in Sunday School were sung one after the other, and then came the baby voice, "Papa, sing about Dod." "Do you mean, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord'?" he asked. "Yes," was the answer, and in the hush of the twilight, the worship of the children blended with the worship of the angels, and who shall say they did not all behold the Father's face?

The nurture of these years is as silent as that of the dewdrop upon the blade of grass, but it is as real. God's voice is the still, small voice that ever speaks in quietness. The stillness of the moment at the mother's knee, the prayer repeated in the reverent, low tone of the mother's voice, the earnest prayer for him offered in his presence, the Christ-like living in the home, all carry their holy influence to his soul. He feels God, without knowing Him. But there shall come a day when the Voice that has gently called him will be recognized, and he will say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

But general nurture must be supplemented by the definite nurture of each growing possibility. Though the principles underlying this careful watch care and training are stated in connection with Early Childhood, they are applicable to every succeeding period where the same power is developing.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The most marked characteristic of the entire period of early childhood is physical activity, manifesting itself largely in restlessness. The nervous force which later will be used in complex mental processes, now seeks expression through hands and feet and tireless body.

In early infancy activity is entirely purposeless and unwilled, merely the instinctive movement of every part of the body. Gradually, however, through the contact with different objects brought about by his restlessness, the baby learns to reach out for what he wants, and purpose in the activity begins to appear. Later, play affords an outlet for the constant flow of this pent-up power, and the

child lives over again those activities of the busy life around which appeal to him.

From the previous discussion of activity, we know that the child is bringing about far-reaching results, all unconscious to himself, through this never ceasing restlessness of every waking moment. He is growing, through the kneading process of constant movement; he is developing freer use of his muscles; he is building new experiences into character, and he is forming habits of life. How then may this great force be nurtured so that greatest results shall follow?

The law of activity must first be understood. It has been very succinctly stated, "Activity must act, explode or cease to generate."

If it cease to generate entirely it means death, for every organ of the body is using it. If it lessen in amount, it means lowered vitality, and indicates illness or abnormal conditions in some way. The over-strained mother who says to a little one of this age, "I wish you could keep still for five minutes," does not realize what she is expressing. It has been de-

monstrated in scientific tests, that the perfectly normal child under six can keep absolutely still but few consecutive seconds, therefore the desire could only be fulfilled through some disturbed physical condition which would lessen the amount of life itself. Any diminution is everywhere felt, for the same activity which impels hands and feet, impels also the hungry senses, the eager curiosity and every part of a growing mental life. Fortunately for the child, God's finger is on the dynamo of his life, and as long as He wills the activity can not cease to generate.

There are but two alternatives left, an action or an explosion, for activity can no more be confined than steam in an engine. If the explosion has occurred, it has resulted from successful repression. The stopper, "Don't," has been inserted in the last opening through which the nervous force could expend itself, and after a moment of dangerous calm, the inevitable occurs, and the happiness and peace of the entire home is for the time destroyed. The result is just as sure as

that of confining an expanding gas, while its disaster is wrought in the mental and moral as well as the physical realms. Fortunately again for the well-being of the child, it is difficult to secure the last outlet, so fertile is his busy brain.

But without the explosion, the results that come to a child from a policy of repression are very serious. Briefly stated, they are first, irritability and nervousness. The refinement of cruelty is dealt to a little child, compelled by superior force to act contrary to God's law for him and "Keep quiet." Activity which should normally be expended, when confined, reacts upon the cells of the body so that soon there are physical reasons beyond the child's control for his nervousness and crossness.

Second, Friction, in which defiance and stubbornness appear. The severest test which could be imposed upon adults would be a constant and apparently arbitrary thwarting of their desires. Is it to be wondered at that a little, unreasoning life which hears "don't" by the scores of times from morning till night,

grows rebellious, vindictive and obstinate?

Third, Unhappiness and a sense of alienation. Sympathy between two persons is impossible when they are at cross purposes, and happiness which is God's gift to childhood can never be realized when souls are out of touch. Further, discouragement and consequent loss of incentive to effort must inevitably overwhelm a little life that never does anything right.

Fourth, weakened will and character. This is the most serious result of all. One of the great principles already stated makes it clear that development can come only through the activity of the individual himself. If the child is constantly withheld from doing by the word "don't," he can not reach the fullest development of character. Furthermore, character is not built negatively but positively. A building can never be erected by merely keeping out of it all unworthy material. There must be an actual putting together of brick and mortar, and the great truth is evident that whenever a place is filled

by the good, the bad is in that very act kept out, whether in buildings or character. The motive back of many a "don't" is worthy, and often there may be no alternative but to instantly check an action, but for the effect on character building there is a more excellent way than repression. It lies in the expression suggested in the law of activity, but expression under direction.

Some parents realize the necessity of allowing the child's activity to be expended, but fail to see the other side of the matter, namely, that while activity means development, the sort of development that follows will depend on the character of the activity. It is important that a boy's energy be given an outlet, but it is more important whether it make of him a gentleman or a hoodlum. The guidance or neglect of the activity will determine which it is to be.

Too frequent emphasis can not be put upon the fact that every outgoing activity traces a little deeper some pathway that tends toward a habit. The mistake is often made of thinking that habits can

be formed only by "taking thought." It is true that some of the finest habits of life are built into character with painstaking effort, but untidiness and selfishness and irreverence and all their kin reach fullest unfolding in the thoughtless outflow of activity, when no one is attending.

But activity, untrammeled, means more than wrong habits. It means lawlessness and undisciplined character. The child who has learned no higher authority for his acts than his own erratic whims, has laid good foundation for future disregard of the laws of man and God.

The converse of all that has been said concerning both repression and neglect of activity characterizes its wise direction. When the child, ignorant and unskilled, hears a voice saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," his willing response means activity going out in right channels or the formation of right habits. It means a dual joy for him, the joy of activity itself and also the joy from the approval and sympathy of the parent or teacher. Under encouragement he puts forth

greater effort, which means constant development of greater power. Yet more than all, it means that he is learning the greatest lesson of early life, obedience.

Obedience is only activity under law. It begins with submission to the will of the parent, but when at last it is a response of the whole life to the will of God and rendered of voluntary and loving choice, it has reached its highest unfolding. This is the goal toward which all nurture of activity must be directed, else no life is safe after it goes out from the restraints of the home. In the heart of the parent who is a seer, the mere closing of the door or putting away of the toy in response to a request is not the thing most desired, for that is external and true obedience is internal. The father, possessing insight, wants the heart as well as the hand of the boy to close the door or put away the toy. Without this, no victory is gained. The act itself is the least of all. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire. * * * Then said I, Lo, I come. * * * I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my

heart." This attitude of voluntary heart acquiescence to the will of another is never the product of compelling power, else God would force His children to obey, since obedience is the thing He most desires. Force can sway the hand but not the heart. Paul, whose tireless activity spent itself out under the direction of his Master, discloses the great secret when he says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." The eternal Father says to His child, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

It is by love, by words of approval, by patient encouragement and help, and also by experiencing the consequences of each act, whether joyous or painful, that the child is led to follow the one who points out the path for his activity. Soon he faces the words, "right," and "wrong," and though knowing only at first that "right" is the thing permitted, and "wrong," the thing denied, he feels the difference in the results of each. Then he learns that the pathway of the thing called "right," is not an arbitrary one laid

down by mother or teacher, but the pathway traced by God Himself, wherein we all must walk, parent and child, teacher and pupil alike. When with dimmest understanding but loving heart, he first sets faltering foot in that path, because he catches glimpse of its shining light, that "shineth more and more unto the perfect day," the one who has nurtured him will hear God's voice speaking to his soul, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

HUNGRY SENSES

Hungry senses, directed in their quest by a hungrier mind, mark the second great characteristic of early childhood. These are the channels through which the world around comes into the life of the child. The sights and sounds of the physical realm, when carried beyond the portals of the senses, under the marvelous transmutation of God's touch, become ideas. The process, in so far as its secret has been revealed, will not be discussed at this point, but rather the relation of these impressions to character.

In early years the senses are undiscriminating as far as the real worth of an impression is concerned. The vulgar picture will be admired as quickly as the beautiful one, if its colors are attractive. The impure word is caught as readily as the pure. There is no standard of values; even taste is not yet formed, and eyes and ears hungrily reach out for anything to satisfy their voracious appetite. Each sensation which is reported to the mind through the senses and intricate nervous system, supplies an idea, embodying itself. It is with these that all the thinking of the child is done, these rouse his feelings and prompt his actions and, finally, mean character. Manifestly, then, his life can be no better than the things he sees and hears, handles and tastes, for he lives in a world of sensations and not of ideas. This was the thought of the mother who said, "I never wash my little children's faces at night, and put them to bed all sweet and clean on the outside, that I don't think that I would give all the world if I could somehow get inside and wash that too." But the inner

cleansing from the influence of sight and sound no hand can perform. God forgives sin, but even His touch does not remove the impression of the picture or the word which memory has put away. The only hope of beautiful character lies in bringing to the unfolding life helpful influences which shall be stronger in their power than the vitiating. When some definite counteracting impression is needed, it is in the sacred confidences of the twilight hour, and at the confessional of a mother's knee, that it can be most effectively given.

Aside from the moral import of the impressions, there is a vital relationship between the senses and the quality of the intellectual life. Since knowledge can come to the child only through his senses, the amount of knowledge, as well as its sort, depends upon the story the senses tell. If they be dull, the knowledge is meagre and life has little with which to build. If they be defective, the impression is either falsely reported or not at all. Tests have revealed the amazing fact that over fifty per cent of children

have imperfect sight and hearing. This means that the first idea given through eye or ear may be wrong; consequently each subsequent idea growing out of it is wrong, at least in part, and ultimately, false conceptions and mistaken courses of action appear, all traceable directly to the ear that did not hear accurately and the eye that told a false tale.

There is also a direct connection between defective senses and conduct. Naturally, the boy who can't see the blackboard, pays no attention to the work placed upon it, and the child partially deaf, disregards the words of the teacher. The overwhelming number of personally observed cases of difficult discipline, disclosed the unvarying fact of defect, either in the senses or the body itself. Therefore a teacher or parent should be very sure that the "bad boy problem" is not physical rather than moral, lest cruel injustice be done.

While the dull senses call for limitless patience, that life be not pitifully narrow, and the defective senses call for wise and remedial attention, the normal, keen,

wide-awake senses exact the most from the conscientious parent or teacher. Eternal vigilance is the price of beautiful building material for the character in such an unfolding life. Each day adds to the store put away in the brain, to reappear later. "We must soon be careful what we do before the baby," says the mother who half grasps the connection between impressions and character building, not realizing that the work is already far under way, that foundations are in. Nurture of the senses must begin with the first dim reaching out for impressions, that only the best may enter, that right tastes may be formed, and self control in this fiercest battle-field of life be learned.

CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD—Continued.

As we come to consider the soul of the child, using this term not in its religious sense, but to include all of life but the physical, we understand that in reality it is indivisible. There are no separate parts or faculties possessing unique powers such as reasoning, remembering, feeling or willing. The whole soul remembers, feels and wills. However, for the sake of clearness and convenience, when it is reasoning, we are accustomed to speak of soul power in that direction as reason, or imagining as imagination or willing as will.

We must understand, also, that the soul of the child is as complete in its possibilities as the soul of the adult, only they are undeveloped. As life and environment grow more complex, new needs arise and these new needs awaken soul

power in a new direction. The expression "I didn't know he had it in him," is frequently heard, as some one has shown unexpected ability under sudden pressure of circumstances. Every brain has millions of undeveloped cells, scientists affirm, signifying that every life is infinitely poorer than it might be. The need is something to arouse its latent power.

CURIOSITY

The little child is at first in a world of total mystery. Sights, sounds, sensations from contact come to him and all are unintelligible. As they are carried to his brain, somewhere, somehow, they awaken a desire to know their meaning, and as the tiny fingers are extended toward objects the soul is reaching also. This soul reaching is curiosity, one of God's most gracious and wonderful provisions for the life, but so often its significance is misunderstood. If there were no curiosity, there would never be any eager attempt to explore the field of knowledge. The disciplined spirit of inquiry that makes for the

world's progress, is only a fuller development of the untutored and disastrous effort of the child to find out about things. We forget that before there can be a flower there must be a bud. Before there can be a scientist who shall pick the rock to pieces to learn its secret, there must be a child who picks a doll to pieces to see what is inside. The pathos of childhood is its bowed head and mute lips under the blow and the stinging word, because judgment is passed, not on motives, as the parent demands for himself, but on the external appearance of the act. We look into our Heavenly Father's face, out of the wreckage and mistakes of a day, and say, "I meant to do it aright, but I am so ignorant," and we are comforted that He looks at the heart and understands. Can we be less pitifully tender toward His little ones?

There are three marked manifestations of curiosity during this period of childhood.

(1) Questions.

In the wordless years of earliest life, mysteries around the child can receive

only partial solution. But the day comes when language gives him a key whereby to unlock the doors, and he begins to ask, "What is it," then "Why," and "Where," and "How." This questioning period commences about the age of three, and is in strong evidence for some time. The answers involve for the most part nouns and verbs, not adjectives nor adverbs, signifying that the child is not yet ready for abstract qualities and characteristics. Simple facts only are sought at first. Questions concern the names of things, activities connected with them, causes and ends and the age-long mystery of origins.

Passing by reluctantly any further discussion of this most fascinating subject of children's questions, four great facts bearing upon nurture must be noted.

1. Repression of the sincere questioning of a child tends to weaken his effort to acquire knowledge.

2. Questions reveal a need felt by the child, and are a guide to the kind of instruction he is ready to receive.

3. A question not only reveals a need,

but is also an assurance that the instruction given will be received, for what the mind wants to learn, it will learn.

4. A sincere question demands a sincere answer.

This statement would seem superfluous, if its need were not apparent in questions dealing with the origin of life. God gives to the mother, first, the sacred privilege of investing these most holy mysteries with purity and sanctity, and through this confidence drawing the life of the child into closer fellowship with her own. If the opportunity be cast away through the evasive or untruthful answer, the facts may come with a taint upon them which can never be wholly removed.

(2) Mischief.

(3) Destructiveness.

A word must suffice upon these other manifestations of curiosity. When truly understood, they reveal only an eager mind trying to obtain new experiences to add to knowledge. It is not total depravity that leads a child to pull the articles from the workbasket, or tear the book, or demolish the toy. He merely wants to

see the object under as great a variety of conditions as possible, to find out all he can about it. It is identical with the spirit of the scientist who essays new combinations to see what the results may be, only in its inception it is crude and unskilled.

Assuredly, instead of dealing harshly with an instinct which in later years may make the whole world richer, it would be wiser to give it legitimate outlet. Toys and blocks which admit of being taken apart and readjusted may begin the training of an Edison or a Stephenson.

INTERESTS

Just as in the realm of the physical, appetite for one sort of food may be greater than for another, even in hunger, so a varying appetite appears in connection with the soul hunger of curiosity. It is strongest in the direction of that in which the life is naturally interested at any given time.

The interests of early childhood are primarily in things which exhibit or suggest activity and in simplest relationships,

found in the little world bounded by home, neighborhood, Kindergarten and Sunday School. Nature makes strong appeal, not on the æsthetic side of tint and shadow, but through the charm of her multiform movements and family life akin to the child's. The bird's nest fascinates because there is connected with it the story of the building and the hungry little brood it sheltered. Tales of animals, fairies and real folk, busy in simple and familiar occupations hold him entranced, and he will watch with rapt attention the performance of most common tasks. It is noteworthy that his interest in all this is not so much in the end to be accomplished, as in the activity itself. Even in his play, the preparations are often more delightful and satisfying than the game which follows.

All this has a deep meaning for one who is trying to help the little life in its unfolding.

1. "Wise education takes the tide at the flood," says James. These interests reveal the fact that in this period, instruction should deal with things, not

with statements of ideas, apart from things, or, in other words, with the concrete, not the abstract.

2. The greater the knowledge of things gained while interest attaches to them, the greater the resources for clear, broad thinking as life matures.

3. When instruction is in line with interests, attention and consequent learning are assured.

4. The child's religious interests will be identical in character with the other interests of this period. He will not be interested in the Being or attributes of God, but God in His great activities as Creator and Wonder-Worker, and in His relation as Father. Jesus will make appeal, not in His discourses, but in His acts of helpfulness and power, and His love.

The great law of teaching is here involved, that interest in and knowledge of the unknown can come only through interest in and knowledge of something which is like it. Paul says in Romans, "For the invisible things of Him since the world began are clearly seen, being per-

ceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity."

Therefore the first definite religious instruction which the child receives, must be upon spiritual truths illustrated in his own known world of interests.

IMITATION

The result of the efforts of curiosity, senses and activity is a constantly increasing store of ideas in the child's mind, relating to these things in which he is interested. As these ideas enter his mind, applying this term to the "intellectual function of the soul," he immediately wants to act upon them, according to a law inborn that an idea always tends to go out into action, unless it is held back. Adults have fixed habits of expressing ideas that come to them, but not so the child. An interesting activity is always a suggestion to him to reproduce it exactly, if possible. This difference between habit and suggestion in action is illustrated in the case of a long-suffering kitten in the hands of a resourceful child. The sight will arouse in another child an irresistible

impulse to try the same experiment, while it always leads his mother to attempt a rescue.

This tendency to exact reproduction of activity is the instinct of imitation, and is a marked characteristic of childhood. As these words are written, a glance through the window discloses surveyors at work with tape and red chalk. Following in their wake is a five year old with diminutive string and piece of red crayon, laying out distances and taking measurements, in exact copy of his predecessors, a genuine "pocket edition" of the original.

While such elaborate exactness characterizes imitation in this period of childhood alone, the impulse to conform is never entirely lost. The desire grows more complex and general as the years go on, and from reproduction of definite acts, the life tries to emulate the spirit and achievements of its hero, and later to be in some harmony, at least, with public opinion. Brave, indeed, is the soul that dares to be a nonconformist in regard to the standards "they" have established.

The results of imitation are profoundly important in character building.

1. When a child re-enacts what he sees, he comes to a better understanding of its meaning. This is one purpose of the imitation of common activities in Kindergarten games.

2. The idea which is acted upon becomes an inseparable part of the life.

3. Habit is the outcome of repeated imitation.

4. Life grows like what it imitates.

With these facts in view, the application to the work of nurture is too obvious for discussion.

IMAGINATION

The child is not content alone to imitate activities. He likes to transform objects and make over familiar situations. This he does through that power of his soul called imagination.

The imagination of this period is "fancy-full," crude, and unbridled by reason or will. The child lives in a world of make believe. He sees whole menageries in the back yard, and performs exploits

worthy of a David or Samson. He gives soul to inanimate objects, and endows them with feelings like his own. He plays with companions of his own creation, and peoples the dark with weird forms. Things are changed at will to suit his whims, the stick becoming the untamed steed and the rocking chair the storm-tossed boat. The magic of his alchemy may extend to himself, and make him for days another person, or even an animal.

This world of make believe is as real to him as the world which is seen through his eyes, and often he can not distinguish between the two. Many a little heart has quivered over the punishment inflicted for "lying", when willful misrepresentation was not in his thoughts. However, harsh treatment of a vivid imagination may result in real deception later on, for the child can not help "seeing things," too wonderful to be enjoyed alone, and then, perforce, there must be deliberate planning to escape the punishment.

This harshness also begins to raise an invisible barrier between the child and

parent. It was felt by a little maiden of rare fancy, who said in a whisper at the conclusion of one of these marvellous tales, "But don't tell Mamma." The impassable wall between many a mother and daughter in later years, once consisted of but a scattered stone here and there.

Passing by the play life of the child where the imagination has fullest scope, the question arises as to the meaning of this power in character building. One purpose stands paramount over every other. It is the "ideal making factory" of the life. From transforming sticks and chairs, the soul will one day pass to transforming memories and thoughts, putting away the unattractive features and investing the attractive with even more charm, through dreams of what might be. From constructing houses out of blocks, the soul will begin to construct ideals out of its experiences and visions, according to a pattern shown on some mount.

As childhood recedes and manhood beckons, the soul unveils this ideal, fashioned in its secret workshop out of all

that appeared most desirable, and with strange, magnetic power, it begins to draw the life after it. Worthy or unworthy, the years to come will see some part, at least, of the ideal, a reality. The character of the imagination, therefore, becomes a matter of supreme concern to nurture. It will be healthy or diseased morally, according to the quality of the material supplied for its use. The two great sources of this material are every day experiences and the story. The meaning of these experiences to the child's life has already been emphasized in various connections, and repetition is unnecessary, but the story holds a unique place in point of influence. Since it comes with deepest significance to the child in the next period of development, when imagination is less mixed with fancy, its discussion will be reserved for that time.

MEMORY

The child has an unfortunate experience with a hot stove and tender fingers bear the cruel scar. Must some one always watch him, year after year, to save him

from a succession of burns? He is taken to school by his mother; must she forever accompany him to insure his safe arrival? Is there no way of understanding a present experience except by passing through it? Life would be an unsatisfactory thing indeed, if this were true, but the soul has the power of retaining past experiences in order that they may throw light upon the present. The business man does not deliberately do again that which was disastrous before, for he remembers the past misfortune. The child will not tomorrow press his little burned hand against the heated iron, for he recalls the pain of yesterday. This gracious gift of God to life, we call memory. Without it, there could be no understanding, no reasoning, no imagination, no knowledge, no growth.

The physical side of memory is most interesting. On the covering of the brain, each in its own place, the images or impression brought in by the senses and the activity are registered. So sensitive and susceptible are the brain cells during childhood, that these impressions are received as clay receives the touch of the

sculptor's finger, and under right conditions, they are ineffaceable. When the soul acts upon these images, they live again, and we say, "We remember."

Two important questions are suggested by these facts. First, what kind of impressions should we attempt to store in the memory during childhood? Second, how may these impressions be made permanent?

To the first question, the child himself makes answer through what he most easily retains and through his needs.

Since he is interested and curious in regard to things, since he spends all his physical activity upon them, since he desires them and thinks about them, we would expect that things, together with experiences and ideas associated with them, would naturally fill his memory. Any observer of childhood knows that this is true. The memory of a little child is overwhelmingly for the concrete, the impressions through the senses and from what he does being far more easily retained than ideas alone. A child will recall the story of the Good Samaritan

more readily than the isolated verse, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The reward or punishment of an act makes a more lasting impression than the dissertation upon it. Since the concrete must be the starting point of thinking, it must come to his soul at some time, and, judged by every condition, this is God's time for it.

The child's needs are also a guide in this matter. The soul is growing in every direction, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually if properly nurtured, and memory holds the constantly increasing food for its growth. Is it to be treated as a stockroom, where packages unavailable for the present are to be laid away until needed, or as a store-house supplied with nourishing food for the present? If memory is a stockroom, then it should be filled with definitions, statements, terms, facts, anything which may be needed sometime. This can be done, for the brain will retain the sound of the words, but meantime, what shall the child feed on? What shall he use? The soul can feed on or make use of only

that which is at least partially understood. This means largely the concrete, for abstract statements can be understood only through the experience or reason, and the child has meagre resources in either direction. Only when a thought embodies what he has experienced, can he grasp and use it.

Is it not the work of nurture to see that memory is provided with that out of which it can supply every need of the developing life today? That, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," may mean much to his mature heart, but what if the child should be frightened tomorrow and need to have his budding faith strengthened from memory? Would not the story of God's care over the baby Moses, Jesus' care for the disciples in the blackness of the storm, with the words, "He careth for you," if these were stored in memory, quiet more quickly the beating heart, and more surely increase his faith? True nurture will not starve life in the present to hoard for the future. Memory now requires all its store for immediate use.

Later, after growth is well under way in every direction, memory not only can supply present needs, but it will also demand a surplus for future use.

The second question, relating to the permanency of these impressions, is answered in meeting the following conditions:

1. A healthy, non-fatigued brain when the impression is made.
2. Close attention.
3. A clear, easily understood and forceful presentation of the thing to be remembered.
4. The use of as many senses as possible. When an impression has been given through eye and ear and touch, for example, it is more definite in the mind than when it has come only through the sense of hearing.
5. A natural association of the new impression with others well known and interesting to the child.
6. Immediate and frequent recall.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERIOD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD—Concluded

THE FEELINGS

A CHILD receives a coveted toy and his face is aglow with delight. He is sharply reproved and anger or grief appears. Another child comes to play with him, and he may assert that all his guest desires "is mine," and tears, and even blows ensue before amicable adjustment can be made. And so through the hours of a kaleidoscopic day, the emotional pendulum keeps swinging from love to anger, from pride to humility, from selfishness to sporadic and angelic bits of generosity. What is the significance of it all in the life of the child?

Before considering this vital question, shall we note some characteristics of the feelings in Early Childhood?

They center about self, and instinctive feelings, such as hunger and thirst, pain and pleasure, fear, pride and anger, are

strongest. Love is present in its first stages, not the self sacrificing sort, but love given in response to love and attention. The child's feelings are easily aroused, fleeting, and usually more or less superficial. Abstractions, such as beauty, duty, responsibility, and relationships in general have but slight effect upon his soul, and the lack of feeling in these directions is commonly expressed by saying that the higher feelings are not yet developed.

The child's feelings in response to religious truth can not, therefore, be those of the adult. He will feel love for God as he feels it for his mother, because of His love, provision and care for him. God's power and the mystery that envelops Him will awaken a response of awe and wonder in his soul, and absolute confidence that He can do anything. But this same power and majesty, carelessly presented, may call out fear, not the godly sort that is afraid of grieving Him by sin, but the physical fear that casts out love. He does not have the sense of moral obligation to God, for that again goes into

the abstraction of thought. His religious life begins in feeling, pure and simple, and his creed is in I John, "We love Him because He first loved us."

Most interesting lines of discussion open out from the subject, but they are not pertinent to the chosen theme of this book. The only legitimate question is, "What is the work of nurture in connection with the feelings?"

Before this can be answered, the purpose of the feelings in character building must be clear. Then we shall know what nurture must do.

No feeling has a right to exist for itself. There is a task for it to perform, namely, to lead the soul to action. If unhindered it will always do this. The careful analysis of any action will reveal a motive power in some feeling, ranging from the lowest desires for self gratification to the sublime heights of love that denies self for the Master's sake. Knowledge alone does not suffice for action. A man may be familiar with the claims of Jesus and even acknowledge them, but until he feels a great need of Him, he will

not become a Christian. The sermon may compel the admiration of the mind, but unless it move the heart no man will practice it. Jesus summed up his commands in "Love," not "Know," for He knew that loving meant God-like living. It is significant that the fruitage of the Spirit appears in the feelings of "love, joy, peace," before it can be manifest in the acts of "long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self control."

This indissoluble relation between feeling and action gives deep meaning to the words of Dr. W. H. Payne, "At least the half, and perhaps the better half of education consists in the formation of right feelings."

The work of nurture in connection with the feelings is now apparent. It must endeavor to develop right feelings in order to secure right actions and consequent strong character. This development is secured through repeatedly arousing the feelings, and giving them expression in action until they are habitual.

1. How may the Feelings be Aroused?

Passing by all the physiological and psy-

chological processes involved, and using the term, feeling, as it is popularly understood, the law that governs its appearance may be stated thus: "A feeling is occasioned by the touch of an impression upon the soul." With older people, these impressions may come from without or from a thought within, but with little children they come almost entirely from without. The sort of feeling aroused will evidently depend upon the sort of impression that comes, as well as the condition of the soul that receives it. This difference in conditions, or difference in lives as we ordinarily say, explains why the Sunday School lesson has such varied effects in the same class, or even upon the same child at different times.

Keeping in mind the law that some impression must precede a feeling, true nurture asks, "In what way can these impressions best be given, that desired feelings may be aroused?"

1. They are not given through command.

Common sense would recognize the absurdity of attempting to awaken

anger by saying to a group of happy children, "Be angry." But why is the absurdity not equally apparent in saying, "Be loving," "Be sorry," "Be reverent?" Yet this is a method on which countless teachers and parents place their dependence. Suppose, for instance, reverence be the feeling desired; a thought of God's greatness and power and holiness must be given. If, to the sensitive soul of the child, the teacher bring the story of Sinai, or the story of Majestic Power as it is set forth in the 104th Psalm, or the glory of the Heavenly throne with the adoring multitudes, following with the words, softly sung,

"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of Thee,
Heaven and earth are praising Thee,
Oh Lord, most high."

the result will be true reverence.

2. Suggestion is a most effective way of conveying these impressions.

Instead of saying to the child, "This is the thought you should have, and this is what you should feel, and this is what you

ought to do," he is allowed to draw meanings and have feelings of his own, for then they are genuinely a part of his soul, not something foisted upon him.

But even though the application is not made, nurture will consciously present impressions intended to suggest certain feelings. The Sunday School lesson, the missionary story, the visit to the poor family, the song carefully selected, all fall in this class. Special mention should be made of the great effect upon the child in making attractive in another, the feeling desired for him. A single incident will illustrate this: A frightened little candidate for the Beginners' Class and his stern mother stood one Sunday morning before the Primary superintendent. "He's got to stay in here by himself today," she said; "I won't have such nonsense. Look at him, with his first trousers on! I'm ashamed of him!" The superintendent did look and saw the new trousers, and in them the trembling little body, and a soul speechless with terror at facing for the first time, alone, the unknown experience of a great world, even though it was en-

closed in four walls. There was no trace of relenting in the mother's face, and any plea for pity was useless. But the new trousers gave a possible key to the situation. "Why, so he has new trousers on!" the superintendent said. "I want to see them," and very thoroughly and enthusiastically they were inspected. "I didn't know that he was so nearly a man that he could wear trousers instead of dresses. I am sure he will stay alone today because men do and are not at all afraid." She waited. Gradually the little head lifted as the thought of bravery began to make its appeal. He put his hand into the hand of the superintendent, and without hesitation started on the perilous journey across the room to the Beginners' section, where no punishment could have driven him a few moments earlier, and proud and heroic sat by himself through the hour. Such is the power of suggestion.

Two points, however, must be carefully guarded in deliberate effort to arouse a feeling.

1. Care must be exercised not to over stimulate feeling, as an excess beyond

that which can be expended in action has an after weakening and reactionary effect. This has its illustration in certain methods of evangelistic work with children, where results are measured by their hysterical condition when the meeting concludes. Contrast with this the gentleness which breathes through the story of the Master's touch, as He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them, when He had said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

2. It is as injurious to a child to attempt to force a feeling before its normal time, as to a bud, to pry open its petals to hasten God's processes. Even the Divine Child "grew." "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual," is God's law of unfolding life.

But these consciously presented impressions form only a small part of the sources of suggestion to the child. The countless sights and circumstances of his everyday life all have a voice for him, and a feeling follows their message.

Every mother who has suffered morti-

fication over the unaccountable behavior of her child toward a guest, knows the sometimes untoward as well as helpful working of suggestion from personality. Atmosphere has the same power. "I don't know what there is in your home," said a visitor to her hostess; "I can't define it, but it makes me want to be good." Music may be suggestive, aside from what it actually says. It would seem as if no sane superintendent would prepare for prayer by a two step song, or follow the lesson on, "The Washing of the Disciples' Feet", by, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," but it was done. It would seem as though no primary teacher could be so insensible to suggestion from objects, as to try to teach worship in giving by taking the offering through a hole in the tail of a jointed tin rooster, but that self-same rooster is no myth.

The subject expands into endless ramifications. True nurture essays the difficult task of analyzing the impressions that come from suggestion—guarding against the harmful, and multiplying the helpful.

3. Impressions may be given and feelings aroused through doing the act which would naturally result from the feeling.

This is the reason why a reverential attitude helps to arouse real reverence, and a smiling face and cheery tone actually bring cheerfulness in a case of the blues. Little children are so imitative that they quickly copy the outward manifestations of a feeling, and the inner state tends to follow This is further a reason for leading them into acts of loving service, that love and kindred gracious feelings may gain strength through the reflex influence of the action upon the soul.

One word should be spoken on the negative side. Since each recurrence of a feeling strengthens its power, nurture will seek to avoid the conditions which would arouse wrong feelings. "But should not the child control himself?" some one asks. Instinctive feelings are stronger than the power of self control in the beginning, and life needs shielding more than testing. God says, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger," or, literally, "Fathers, irritate not your chil-

dren beyond measure, but nourish them fully in the instruction and admonition of the Lord."

2. The Expression of the Feelings.

Every normal feeling tends irresistibly to express itself in action unless it is held in leash. The story of the poor family needs the addition of no impassioned appeal; the child is already wondering whether he can empty his bank for their help. If expression is denied to the feeling, it tends to die out, and continual repression means a lessening either in power to act or power to feel. "Sentimentalists" have lost power to act except in tears or ejaculations when their emotions are stirred, and "hardened" people have lost the power to feel under ordinary stimulation. Therefore nothing is more fatal to vigorous development of the feelings of the child than to allow them to be dissipated without expression in the action they naturally suggest.

But nurture will see that little hands are allowed to hinder by "helping" to make the beds, or dust the room or carry the package, not simply that love may grow

stronger, but that in after years there may be the desire to lift the burdens in reality from wearied shoulders, for the higher feelings of life develop from the instinctive feelings, if they have proper expression in the beginning. Love that is almost barter in early years, since it is bestowed for value received, if given constant expression in acts of helpfulness, will become the self-denying love of later years. Love for self, which is so strong in a child, can be developed toward its manifestation of self respect, by using it at first in childhood, "to help this good body grow both strong and tall." Childish hate may be directed against wrong things, in preparation for indignation against sin of future years. It must not be forgotten, however, that in God's economy every feeling, if properly used, has its work to do in character building in every stage of its development, so that even the foundation stones may be laid in beauty and strength.

THE WILL

The power of the soul to make deliberate choice of action, and unwaveringly to

execute it, is undeveloped in this period of Early Childhood. The child does not balance reasons or desires. Instead, he acts impetuously and unthinkingly, as the feeling of the passing moment impels him. Often one desire so completely absorbs his mind as to obscure everything else, and he will make any effort to gain his end. His case is like that of a man who "sets his heart" on a thing, or who harbors an alluring temptation too long, until it overpowers him. This is the explanation of most cases of obstinacy and strong will, as is proven by the disappearance of the "will" when the mind is diverted.

One of the deepest desires of every parent and teacher is that there shall in truth be a strong will as the life matures, and so its training is sought. But just what is meant by it? We know there is no separate faculty to be strengthened as the arm is strengthened. What can be trained? The only training possible is in helping the soul to form the habit of choosing to do the right thing, or, analyzing still more closely, of following the

promptings of the noblest feelings of the heart.

The inseparable relation between feeling and action has been noted. If the noblest feelings can be made the strongest, they will be followed. The previous discussion shows that their strength is increased every time they are aroused and acted upon, and this leads to habit in both feeling and action. The nurture of the will or executive power of the soul is seen, therefore, to be most intimately connected with the nurture of the feelings, and its work will consist in making the right course of action so appealing that the child will desire and choose it for himself, until it becomes habitual, and consequently, undebatable. Forcing him to follow it, secures the action; it does not arouse the feelings that would lead him to choose to do the act himself.

An act compelled is like an apple tied to a fruit tree; it did not grow there and has no connection with the life of the tree. A fruit tree that can not bear its own fruit is worthless, and a life that does not reach the point of producing its own right

actions, independent of human coercion, is a failure. The comparison may be pressed still further. No quantity of apples tied upon a tree will ever make it produce apples, and even so, no number of right acts imposed upon a child will, in itself, make him do right things voluntarily. This can only come through strengthening in his own soul the processes that lead to right action. The truth of this is proven in the case of thousands of boys who did the right things at home because they were compelled to do so, but when they left home they went wrong. The one who should have nurtured was too busy, or too thoughtless, to take the time to lead into strength and uprightness the thinking and feeling and choosing of the soul while it was developing. It was easier to say peremptorily, "Do this," with the inevitable result, that when compulsion was removed character gave way because it was weak.

But some one is saying, "That is a very questionable doctrine; 'Let the child do as he pleases, if he don't want to do the right, don't force him.' "

Such a deduction from the argument entirely misses the point. The child must do the right, but, in a nutshell—which is the stronger constraint—outer or inner? Which makes character surer, the voice without, saying, 'You must,' or the voice within which says it? No external power could have made Paul's record of service, or Brainerd's or Paton's. All the force of the Russian government was powerless to obtain that which each Japanese soldier poured out upon his country's altar in the fight for supremacy in Manchuria. These deeds are the soul's response to the most irresistible power in the world—a consuming passion. It was such a passion, intense beyond earthly fathom, that led the Savior through Gethsemane to Calvary.

Because this is so, the Heavenly Father's effort to secure right action from His children is not evident in external compulsion. Through His favor and fellowship, the joy of His approval, the peace that passeth understanding, the "Well done," the eternal reward, He endeavors to arouse love for Himself and

what He desires, in order that His will may be chosen.

According to this Divine pattern human nurture labors. At the very first, the parent must make choice for the child, but earlier than is usually appreciated, definite training may be begun. The loving smile of the mother and her known wish, her approval or disapproval, her recognition and encouragement, the knowledge that, "Whatsoever a man soweth that must he also reap," gained through bearing the penalty or enjoying the reward of each choice, the right course made attractive in the story of some one who chose it, or, most magnetic of all, in the life of the one who is nurturing, all these will begin to arouse the inner constraint that compels, and with glad acquiescence the soul will say, "Necessity is laid upon me."

When the life shall learn that the most blessed joy that inheres in right actions is not human approval but God's favor, and for His sake, with face steadfastly set, the right is followed, even though shorn of all external attractiveness, the highest

development possible for a soul has been realized.

APPLICATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

The Sunday School is such an important factor in religious training that a special application of the foregoing discussion to its methods and work seems wise. It is evident that plans can not be detailed, but only some principles underlying the methods be suggested.

THE CRADLE ROLL

In the first department known as the Cradle Roll, nurture can be given by the Sunday School only as it touches the parents. Any Cradle Roll work that culminates in the sentiment of securing the babies' names and calling them, "Our Sweet Peas", has missed its purpose. A peculiar opportunity comes with the flood tide of new parental love. "If I had not been a Christian when my boy was born, I could very easily have been led to Christ, my heart was so tender and full of gratitude," said the father of an only son.

The Sunday School will nurture its

babes through choosing as Cradle Roll Superintendent, a consecrated Christian woman, trained in the school of life's experience, who can come close to other mothers because she, too, has known the valley of the shadow and the sacred joy of a new born life in her arms. A unique opportunity is hers to lead the parents to Christ or into closer fellowship with Him, and to help them understand the meaning of the life He has lent them.

THE BEGINNERS' DEPARTMENT

The Beginners' Department will care for the years between three and six. Nurture will be concerned first with the teacher.

The Teacher.—The child's conception of Christ will be what he sees in the teacher. He can not conceive of any love or tenderness or gentleness greater than appears in her. A mother came to the teacher of her little boy one day and said, "John was playing on the floor this afternoon, and all at once he stopped and watched me, and then said, 'Mamma, I wish you were as much like Jesus as my teacher

is.' " The lesson, the music, the prayer and all the differentiation of the day and place tend to elevate the teacher above those who share his daily life, and envelop her with an atmosphere more mystic and holy. She is connected not with clothes and bread and butter episodes, but wholly with the thought of Jesus, and stands by His side in the child's thought and love, and if he love not the teacher whom he has seen, he can not love God whom he has not seen. Even the physical charm of the teacher will make his picture of the Christ more beautiful. Nurture demands above all else that the teacher of a Beginners' Class suggest "One altogether lovely," to the sensitive, imaginative and imitative soul of the child, for her message to him is ever silently, but irresistibly, "Be ye imitators of me as I am of Christ."

The Place.—The place of meeting must fulfill certain conditions to give proper nurture.

Because of the restlessness of these years, it ought to afford opportunity for physical movement. Even if a separate room is not available, screens or curtains

should make it possible for the children to change their position frequently. The separation will also remove the temptation for curiosity to obtain satisfaction through roving eyes. The place should provide comfortable seating arrangements, for impressions carried within from strained muscles and tired limbs are far stronger than from ideas that the teacher gives, and these will consequently receive the attention.

But it is not sufficient to plan for seclusion and comfort. Nurture thinks beyond and deeper than this. The child is gaining his first impressions of religious things during these years, and his ideas will be derived from what his senses give him. There is no way to give him the thought of the beauty of holiness, and the joy that the religion of Jesus Christ brings, except to make every thing associated with it as glad and beautiful as may be. Choice pictures, flowers, sunshine, order, all mysteriously transmit their beauty to the child's thought of God. The more attractive the visible things, the more magnetic the charm of

the invisible. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

The Equipment.—The equipment is not to be a heterogeneous collection of things, and yet the child must be taught through his senses. A Bible which can be kept before the children and reverently handled, to teach reverence by suggestion, is of first importance. Little chairs, or an equally comfortable substitute, a blackboard and an instrument, if possible, will give good working capital.

Since taste is forming at this time and every thing has an influence in determining its direction, the beautiful pictures in black and white are gaining favor through their artistic execution and subdued coloring. To this equipment may be added special objects designed to make the facts of special lessons clearer—the sand table occasionally, or models. Thoughtful teachers are more and more convinced that while Kindergarten principles should obtain, the Kindergarten should not be moved bodily into the Sunday School. Values must be balanced, and over against the reasons

which might be given for bringing in all the equipment of the week-day environment, there is this great fact:—the child is to be taught that religion is the supreme thing in the world, and he can learn it only by differentiating it in a tangible way from other things. This means that the methods, music, material and beauty associated with it ought to make it distinctive, and more attractive than any of the week-day surroundings.

After he learns that it is the chief thing in the world, he can learn how to bring it down to the common things of life without sacrificing its supremacy, instead of dragging the every-dayness into it.

The Program.—The program must be varied, because self control is weak, and attention will be given to one thing only so long as interest is active. Music should have a prominent place, provided it is meaningful, choice, and suggestive of the thought desired, in music as well as words. Since this is the rhythmic and imitative period of life, motion songs can be occasionally used, provided the motions

are not mechanical and artificial. The foot notes which say that at 1 the hands should be clasped, at 2 they should wave, and at 3 be raindrops, miss the point of a motion song. Unless the child spontaneously expresses the thought which the song suggests to him, the motions have no value, aside from a rest exercise.

The entire program should be planned around the thought of leading the child into a genuine love for God. Nature is beautiful, but its place in Sunday School is subordinate to Him. The most exquisite song that ends with birds and flowers falls below the highest nurture. Love must be both aroused and expressed during the hour's session. Music, Scripture, the enumeration of His blessings, the joy over birthdays and new scholars He has sent, the lesson, the carefully selected pictures and stories of what His love has done for other boys and girls unlike them, an atmosphere of gladness and reverence will kindle it; the offering service, the prayer, Scripture and music will express it. The suggestion from teacher, place, program and

lesson combined, should be a great, wonderful God who loves little children, as well as a Christ who took the children in His arms.

The Lesson.—The course known as "The Two Years' Course for Beginners" affords the best subject matter for the lessons for the following reasons:

1. Bible truths needed first in the life of a little child have been carefully selected and arranged in their logical order.

2. As many lessons as are needed to make each truth clear and to fix it in memory are devoted to it.

3. The setting for the truths to be taught is given in stories, not abstract statements.

4. The same Golden Text is used for all the lessons teaching one truth, is simple, intelligible and, by repetition in connection with several lessons, can be fixed.

5. The pictures accompanying the lessons are very choice both in theme and execution.

Since the only ideas the child will

receive of the lesson must come through his senses and bodily activity, and since, of his senses, sight and touch make a clearer impression than hearing, large use should be made of them. Further, as this is the period of imitation of definite acts, the lesson should present forcibly and fascinatingly, an activity within his power to imitate.

The end sought, as a result of the nurture of this period, is that the child may become truly a child of God, and never know a time when he did not love Him.

This may be achieved, for the heart of a little child is open and peculiarly sensitized to the matchless story of Jesus Christ. When it is presented to him aright, he always responds in faith and love. In this response, the conditions upon which spiritual sonship is conferred are met, for, "As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name."

CHAPTER V

CHILDHOOD—SIX TO TWELVE

No abrupt change marks the transition from the period of Early Childhood to Childhood, but development is continuous and rapid in every direction. The larger social world, entered through school life, and the new intellectual world, revealed through ability to read, widen the child's vision and develop possibilities hitherto latent, because unneeded.

The Sunday School divides the period of Childhood into the "Primary Age," from six to nine, and the "Junior Age," from nine to twelve, basing the division as accurately as is possible upon the awakening of these latent possibilities. The development of this period will therefore be considered according to this classification.

THE PRIMARY AGE—SIX TO NINE

During these years the characteristics of Early Childhood remain in more

or less modified form. Physical growth is still rapid in all parts of the body, the brain reaching almost full size by the ninth year. Parallel with this vigorous physical growth is a mental growth and development equally rapid and many sided. Curiosity is as hungry as ever, still more eager concerning things than abstract ideas, and still a goad to active senses. The mind has increased power to retain what is given it, and about the ninth year enters upon its "Golden Memory Period." The ability to reason is gradually increasing, though it is used more upon relationships between things than between ideas.

The child's feelings are still self-centered, yet development of the social and altruistic feelings is apparent. Children enjoy companionship more than in earlier years, but the longing for others does not reach the intensity which demands the club and gang until later. A feeling of sympathy and desire to help must still be awakened by definite cases of need, plus the influence of parent or teacher, as the child does not yet know

life's hard experiences well enough to read their meaning and give response to them of himself.

If nurture has met its opportunity in the preceding period, the child's love for God and confidence in Him have grown stronger. The Heavenly Father will be as real to him as an earthly friend, and His help a living experience. "How is it that you always have a perfect spelling lesson at school?" a primary teacher asked of one of her boys. "Why, don't you know that Jesus sits in the seat with me every day and helps me?" he replied. The teacher's face betokened her surprise, and the child emphatically reiterated, "He truly does sit with me and help me." Would that God's older children could live as actually in the Presence that was promised for "all the days."

Actions continue to be largely impulsive, carried out according to the strongest present desire, and though right and wrong are more clearly understood than formerly, they do not often determine an act unsupported by other considera-

tions. This is evident in the matter of obedience, whose strengthening into a habit is one of the most imperative tasks of nurture during childhood. Abstract laws and principles of right, so weighty in middle adolescence, have but slight influence over the child, unless joined with them is a strong personality whom the child loves or fears, and whose favor he desires to win through obeying.

There are certain modifications of earlier characteristics, which demand more than a passing notice, because they necessitate greater change in the methods of nurture.

ACTIVITY

Though the restlessness of the preceding period is still in evidence, more and more activity is becoming purposeful and willed. While the child continues to love activity for itself, he is more interested in what it will accomplish than formerly, but an end is not yet sufficiently attractive in itself to hold him to an unpleasant activity for its achieve-

ment. For example, he enjoys both the weaving and the basket, the pasting and the scrap-book, but if pasting and weaving were laborious and difficult, he would not voluntarily go through them to obtain the basket or the scrap-book.

It must be noted further, that activity still expends itself more readily in the realm of the physical than the mental, though there is increasing pleasure in the quest for knowledge, if wisely directed. The Sunday School is beginning to recognize what the day school has learned, that the child both enjoys and masters a lesson which can be approached through physical as well as mental avenues. In consequence, hand work is being introduced to aid in religious instruction, as manual work in the public schools for secular education, with most gratifying results in both cases.

THE SENSES

More skill, more accuracy and more discrimination characterize the work of the senses than in Early Childhood. The impressions are richer in detail and

meaning, because of the increased knowledge possessed by the child. It is a commonplace that we receive from anything in proportion to what we bring to it. The ear of the musician hears in an orchestra what the child or the adult without the knowledge of music could never detect, because he listens with more than they. The child can see in a picture or circumstance, and hear in a conversation or a song, what once he could not, because he brings a larger experience to bear upon it. Criticism of others in the home, the lapses from Christ-like living, the scenes of the street, things pernicious as well as helpful have greater significance in character building than ever before. This gives still graver emphasis to the work of nurture in guarding these wide-open doorways to a hungry soul.

Growing out of the fact that the senses are the greatest source of information to the child's mind, the method of teaching by means of objects has arisen. Rightly used, there is great value in this mode of instruction, but a

serious perversion of its legitimate use has developed in connection with religious instruction of little children. Though the discussion of this may be a possible digression, it seems necessary in order to safeguard nurture from a mistake.

There are two helpful methods of using an object with children in the Beginners' and Primary age. The first is to explain an unfamiliar fact, or make it clear. A model of an oriental house or curios from a mission field are examples of this. The second use is to illustrate a fact. The flower is the visible expression of God's loving care; the table, heaped high with grains and fruits and vegetables at the Thanksgiving service, teaches as no mere words could the fact of God's provision for our need. Objects used in this way require no reasoning power to make their meaning clear. It is only a matter of perception.

The use of an object, however, in order to deduce spiritual truth therefrom for children with reasoning powers

undeveloped, is a mistake. Instead of making the thought clearer to their minds it obscures it. Close examination reveals the reason for this. A child is both imaginative and literal. Through his imagination he can transform one object into another object, as we have already observed, but in this case he is asked to transform an object into an abstract idea. This he does not easily do, since such transformation is made by reason, not by imagination. Further, the spiritual teachings are drawn from the abstract idea which the object is supposed to represent, not from the object itself. Manifestly, therefore, if he does not get the idea he will not get the deductions from it. His mind does not follow beyond the point where he can understand, consequently, his thought remains with the object as it literally is.

To illustrate, take the familiar object lesson of a cup overflowing with water, used to teach the thought of God's manifold blessings in the life. The child is asked to change the cup into the abstract thought of life, and water into the

thought of blessing. This is difficult, for it involves reason and deals with resemblances which are artificial, not real. The child's literalism, therefore, asserts itself, and the cup remains a cup and the water is still water, and while the teacher is drawing conclusions, the child is probably wondering whether her dress will get wet or how he can get a drink.

The same principle obtains in regard to certain types of blackboard illustrations. The child is asked to change a cross into suffering, a crown into victory, a red cardboard heart into life, and a picture of Jesus Christ pinned upon it into regeneration. He does not make these transformations until reason is more fully developed than in this period. Lines remain lines, cardboard is still cardboard and spiritual deductions do not reach his understanding.

The fact that an object or drawing is always interesting does not alter the principle at all, for being interested and being instructed are not necessarily equivalent terms. The lesson must always be interesting, but it must also

gain entrance according to the laws of the mind to be instructive.

INTERESTS

The interests of this period include those of the preceding period, but they are more diverse and far-reaching than in Early Childhood. They still center around the concrete, and especially physical activity. Crude and amazingly heterogeneous collections begin to make their appearance in boys' pockets and girls' treasure boxes. Dolls are never so dear to their fond mothers as in this period. Games and active outdoor sports appeal to both boys and girls, those games being particularly enjoyable which give the individual an opportunity to shine. Real team play is impossible at this time, since in honor each prefers himself. Any scepticism upon this point will be dispelled by listening to the modest aspirants for office when the positions in a football game are being assigned. The explanation for this lies partially in the instinct of rivalry, which arrays individual against indi-

vidual, all through the early years of life. When the social feeling which welds individuals into groups becomes strong, rivalry will appear between gangs and clubs rather than between individuals.

A significant change occurs in connection with that which the child desires to imitate. At first, definite acts focused the most of his interest and aroused imitation, now, interest begins to attach itself to the actor as well, and the child not only desires to imitate the deed but also to emulate the doer. Out of this a little later comes real hero worship, an incentive to action than which life holds no greater. Another fact in connection with this is also significant; those whom he desires to resemble need not be in the home circle nor in his environment, as at first, but may be distant in time and place. This new interest in people whom he can not see lends added charm and value to Bible stories and, if told aright, they will do for his life what can be done in no other way so effectively.

Surely Agur, the son of Jakeh, saw no

eager little faces upturned to his, pleading, "Tell me another," or he would have added to the things that are never satisfied, nor say, "It is enough," the hunger of a child for a story. Since hunger is always indicative of a need in the developing life, there must be a reason for this craving. It is found in connection with the rapid development and requirements of the imagination.

There are two ways in which a truth may be taught. One is through an abstract statement, such as, "Intemperance destroys the happiness of a home." The other is through the concrete, or the story of a home blighted by liquor. The first appeals to reason, and can be understood only in the light of experience; the second requires simply the exercise of a vivid imagination. Of reasoning power, the child at this time has little, but he has an imagination vivid, strong and hungry, eagerly reaching out for something to feed upon. The well-told story fully satisfies his hunger, and at the same time meets the greatest need of the whole soul, namely,

the placing of right ideals before it in such a way that they will be worked out into character.

To accomplish this result three things are necessary: first, the thought suggesting the ideal must be understood; second, it must rouse the feelings; third, it must lead to action. The story meets every demand.

1. It makes the truth concrete.

The statement, "Love will endure hardships for the sake of Jesus Christ," is only a thought in the brain. The story of Paul or Livingston brings the truth out of that intangible world, puts flesh upon it and the breath of life within, and the child can in imagination exercise his sense of sight, of hearing and of touch upon it.

2. It makes the truth visible, and therefore to be grasped through the senses or imagination.

A thought can not be seen by itself, but if lived out in the life of a person it may be seen by the physical eye, or, if mountains and centuries intervene, still by the eye of the soul—the imag-

ination. When it is seen, the fact itself is understood, though the reasons for it may not be comprehended. While no man may ever know why God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, we understand that He does love us, as we see the Babe in the manger and the blessed Savior upon the cross. Only when a truth is so seen does it become real and, consequently, of any worth to the life. Herein lies the need and the power of "Living Epistles," not only in the material world, but also in the world of the imagination.

3. When the truth is seen it always arouses feeling.

A thought which is merely known does not move men. It is possible to read of a terrible tragedy with measured pulse and indifferent heart, but if the reader was an eye witness, or allows imagination to picture it for him, his soul quivers in its presence. One of the greatest needs of our teachers is to see the Master among the hills and by the blue waters of Gennesaret, to

look into His face, to hear His voice till hearts burn. Then they will not repeat words, but, "Looking upon Jesus as He walked," say, "Behold Him!" in such a way that the children will see Him also, and a great love for Him be born in their hearts, and a longing to follow.

4. The truth that is seen and felt impels to action.

This has already been discussed in connection with the feelings, and an illustration will suffice at this time.

A mission Sunday School was listening to a talk on the fixedness of habits formed in youth, and to make it clearer the speaker said, "Boys, do they ever lay cement walks in this neighborhood?" Every eye was riveted on him, as they answered, "Yes!" "Did you know," he continued, "that if you were to take a sharp-pointed stick and write your name in the cement while it was soft, it would harden and remain there as long as the walk lasted?" "Of course," he hastily added, as a significant expression appeared on their faces, "no boy here

would be mean enough to do such a thing," but it was too late—the picture had done its work and the purpose of handing autographs down to posterity would be executed at the first opportunity.

Such is the power of the image or picture to lead to action. Only the Father knows how many sons have come home from the far country because of the matchless story of the prodigal. Only He knows how many consecrated men and women are in Africa and China and Japan because they saw the heroes in God's Hall of Fame. Surely this is why the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

5. If the imagination steadily hold the picture, some day the life will be like it.

It is impossible for the soul to look day after day upon anything without unconsciously being changed into its likeness. Hawthorne has exquisitely portrayed the transformation of Ernest into the image of the Great Stone Face, and, in so doing, has told the story of every life that gazes fixedly on its ideal. Herein lies the blessed secret of Christ-likeness: "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory even as from the Lord, the Spirit."

In the light of these wonderful possibilities growing out of "seeing the invisible," the oft-quoted words of Stanley Hall are most significant, "Of all the things that a teacher should know how to do, the most important, without any exception, is to know how to tell a story."

APPLICATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

The requirements of the Primary department in regard to teacher, place

and equipment are similar to those in the Beginners' class, save that a song roll may now be helpfully added, since the children are learning to read. In the matter of instruction, however, some variation from preceding methods is necessary, owing to the rapid mental development of the children.

I. General Program.

In addition to the thought of making the service worshipful and joyous, the program must be planned with reference to three important things:

(1) The Truth to be presented in the lesson.

This should be a guide to program building in the preceding department as well, but it becomes imperative in this and the Junior departments, since the truth to be taught changes weekly, and therefore must be fastened during one hour's work. Memory in this period depends upon the force of the impression rather than upon association, as in later periods, hence all songs and exercises should emphasize the one thought to be given in the lesson. This

does not require new songs and services weekly. It merely requires that the old songs and exercises be approached from the standpoint of the lesson, that which is pertinent to it being developed in each.

The results of this plan are two-fold: first, a freshness in the program each week, even with familiar features, and second, cumulative emphasis upon one truth, thus fulfilling the conditions of memory, and therefore of nurture.

(2) The Activity of the children.

The increased mental ability will permit interesting exercises to take the place of some of the physical outlets for activity necessary in the preceding period, but they must be brief and compelling in their attractiveness.

The use of motion songs is outgrown, especially with boys. During many years there has remained in memory the expression in the face of a boy, head and shoulders taller than any other child in the primary department, as he stood pointing to pedal extremities, not less than number fours, and singing, "Little

feet, be very careful where you take me to." The sentiment could not possibly have been wrung from him had not the superintendent been his mother.

Hand work suggestive of the lesson, such as pasting, coloring, tearing, cutting and simplest writing for the older ones, is growing in favor as a means of utilizing the activity and impressing the lesson. An outline of the methods of this work is impossible here, but three words of caution must be spoken.

First: Choose the time for hand work carefully.

While it will give wise outlet for activity and aid memory, if used in the wrong place it will tend to dissipate the influence of the lesson. Even the pasting of a picture when the feelings are deeply stirred could give them sufficient expression so that they would be satisfied without further action. They ought to impel to imitation of the action in the story with all the intensity that has been aroused, instead of being expended in a mechanical way. In view of this fact, the proper subject of the hand work

would seem to be the lesson of the week preceding, and the best time for it, just prior to the beginning of the session, if that be of the usual hour length. This time is practicable even where the session immediately follows the church service, and it has three advantages. It will counteract lack of punctuality, will utilize activity at its most disastrous stage—the unoccupied minutes before the program proper begins—and will not crowd out from the hour any other training equally important.

Second: Remember that valuable as the hand work is in clarifying and impressing the lesson, it is only a shell containing the truth. Therefore, a teacher who occupies a large part of the hour in this way is not giving the child sufficient spiritual nourishment.

Third: This work must be raised above the level of similar week-day occupations.

This may be done through emphasizing the fact that the child is making a book of Bible stories, and special care must be used to make it beautiful and worthy.

A mission of help or cheer to some one else may also be held out as a climax to its completion.

(3) The program must be planned with reference to training in habit formation.

Though the latter part of Childhood is the habit forming period of life, pre-eminently, yet habits of Christian activity must be begun during these earlier years. The children in this department are not too young to lay the foundations of regular and punctual attendance, bringing of Bibles, giving to church expenses and benevolences, interest in and gifts for missionary work, daily prayer and, under proper conditions, church attendance.

II. Instruction.

While special teaching must be given in connection with each habit to be formed, the supplemental work and the lesson constitute the principal subjects of instruction.

1. Supplemental Work.

Scripture for memorization in this period should be chosen primarily to

help the children in habit formation. Information about the Bible and storing for future use belong in the next period of "Golden memory." Verses that give the thought of God's love, and incite loving obedience to Him and to their parents, and loving service to others, are fundamental and should predominate. The Twenty-third Psalm and Lord's Prayer will have real meaning, and therefore help for the child at this time, if carefully taught. A few of the great stories of the Bible, including those of Christmas and Easter, may be added, and some of the hymns of the church expressing God's majesty and the thought of service.

2. The Lesson.

Every principle of nurture already discussed bears upon the presentation of the lesson.

(1) The lesson must bring an ideal to the child in concrete form. This will be the truth connected in some way with a person. Where the lesson gives the negative side, or the absence of the truth in life, the positive side must also be pre-

sented and made more attractive, since the child's impulse to imitate, even when warned against it, is stronger than the warnings. He must always be sent away with something to do, rather than not to do.

(2) This ideal must always be given in a story. When the lesson material is abstract, like the Epistles or Psalms, a truth to be taught should be selected from it, and then made concrete and living in some Bible story.

(3) The story itself is the mainspring to action, not the application.

The forceful, vivid and realistic presentation of the story, made possible as the teacher lives in it, impels the child to imitation; the application, or "ought," appeals to his reason and compels him, and action is always more hearty when impelled than when compelled. The only after touch upon the story which is helpful to little children lies in plans for imitating the activity which has been pictured. Even this is not always to be done. Jesus left the most wonderful story He ever told with no words of

application, for they were unnecessary. He knew that every prodigal would feel a tug at the heartstrings and an impulse to go home. At the conclusion of the story of the Good Samaritan He merely said, "Go thou and do likewise." Allowing the children to suggest what they would like to do if they so desire, or making the suggestion indirectly by song, or prayer, or the teacher's announcement of her own purpose will carry far more weight than any injunction to act, for, "The deepest spring of action in us is the sight of action in another."

CHAPTER VI

THE JUNIOR AGE—NINE TO TWELVE

The years we are now to consider are among the most interesting in all the period of development, and among the most exacting, as well, in the problems they present. These problems are related, in the main, to the "new invoice of energy" which has come into the life, the social feelings, habit formation and hero worship, and knowledge and patience are almost exhausted in their solution.

A general survey of the period reveals much that we are already familiar with, together with certain new conditions. We find that some of the winsomeness and much of the demonstrativeness and dependency of earlier childhood are gone. The sense of approaching manhood or womanhood is beginning to stir in the soul and, coincident with it, a growing independence is manifest. While the child must still be under authority, the

wisest nurture will consult his feelings and wishes as far as possible, for just beyond this period lies life's crisis, and every bond of sympathy and confidence must unite the helper to the one to be helped as the stormy passage is entered upon.

With all this growing independence, however, life is very far from possessing the marks of maturity. It is careless and care free, irresponsible in general, yet proud to carry definite responsibilities. There is delight in anything which suggests pre-eminence over others, such as badges, buttons and regalia of any kind, or public recognition and reward. Frankness almost to the point of brutality is a frequent trait, particularly of boys of this age, for they do not lend themselves as easily as the girls to the polite usages and subterfuges of society. This characteristic must have its counterbalance in genuineness and freedom from any affectation, especially a pious one, on the part of those dealing with the children, in order to win their love and respect.

A marked literalism is also apparent, and instead of the delicately imaginative child of earlier years a matter of fact young person stands out with a desire for exact statement and, if need be, under such oath as, "Upon your word," or "Cross your heart and hope to die." There is a strong sense of honor connected with such asseverations, and woe betide the one who swears falsely or tinkers with the truth.

There are certain conspicuous characteristics which demand a more detailed consideration, and the first to be noted is the energy.

ENERGY

The very sound of the word is indicative of the nervous force that dominates the life during these years. It is well nigh impossible for action to be noiseless or measured in this period, especially during the latter part. The energy continues to be more vigorous in the physical realm, and active sports of all kinds are attractive. One of the greatest problems of nurture at this time, as has

already been suggested, centers around the wise use of this energy in the home, the day school, the Sunday School and, most important of all, in the hours unoccupied with definite tasks, for habits are forming through its outgoing.

THE SOCIAL FEELINGS

Another striking characteristic of this period appears in the rapid development of the social feelings. No longer is the child content with one or two playmates, but he craves the companionship of several of the same age and sex. This desire finds expression in the coterie of bosom friends, the gang and the club so prevalent between the ages of ten and fourteen. The bonfire with its circle of kindred spirits, the cave with its password and dark plottings, the street corner and recruiting whistle have almost irresistible fascination. What one boy does not dare, the gang will attempt, and the composite conscience may fall far below that of the individual. The sense of honor already mentioned is very strong among the members, and in ab-

solute loyalty to one another they stand or fall.

These organizations exist among the girls as well as boys, but differ in the purpose for which they are formed, the girls organizing more as adults, while the boys' clubs are overwhelmingly to expend energy, lawfully or otherwise.

The dangers and opportunities growing out of this strong tendency toward segregation can not be overestimated. A walk along a city street in the evening reveals the fact that the nurture of the sidewalk and the ice cream parlor has largely supplanted the nurture of the home on the social side. The table with the evening lamp—"the home's lighthouse"—and the family circle complete about it, are an almost unknown experience in the life of the average American child. In a recent convention a speaker, who is in charge of a great penal institution filled with human derelicts, said he believed it to be as much a duty of the church to preserve at least one evening a week sacred to the home, as to designate another for the prayer meeting or preaching service.

The home ought to be the center of the child's social life. Why can not the lights and music and companionship there be made as attractive as the lights of the corner store, or billiard hall, or the sound of the street piano, which pave the way to the saloon and the dance hall later? That boys and girls will congregate during this period and the next is a law unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Nurture asks whether the home does not furnish a better environment during this energetic, habit forming and irresponsible period than the corner store or the "gang?" It asks whether the society of those invited within its doors for a good time, under the sympathetic and watchful eye of the father and mother, is not apt to be more conducive to true character building than the society of the chance acquaintance with no credentials save his skill in story telling and initiation into fascinating mysteries? It asks still further, in this age of hero worship, whether the home should not erect the ideals of manhood and womanhood

through example, through books, through honored guests who have achieved true distinction instead of delegating this privilege to the group around the bonfire or the man who gathers the admiring circle to listen to the salacious tale? The home which provides for this social craving within its sheltering walls, blending the faces of father and mother with those of companions in the most joyous of good times, and, after the evening altar, when the lights are darkened, knows that each pillow is pressed by its own pure face, that home is a bulwark of the nation and the ante chamber to one of God's many mansions.

May God have pity on the thousands of children who live in houses, but are homeless.

HERO WORSHIP

In this new interest in his fellows, all figures do not stand out in equal proportion against the child's horizon. Some loom very high, and in the inner chamber of the soul, incense is burning at their shrine. Out of the earlier interest in

people, and desire to imitate their actions, there begins to emerge the great passion of hero worship with all its power in shaping ideals and determining character. If it be true, indeed, that life grows like what it gazes fixedly upon, then nurture has here an important work.

The hero of any period must inevitably embody that which the life most admires at the time, hence physical strength and skill, courage and daring will be prominent factors in a boy's hero in this period. This hero may be, perchance, the physical director of the Y. M. C. A., the champion baseball or football player, an explorer or adventurer, a desperado, or—happy case—a father who has not forgotten how to swim and fish and hunt and play ball. A boy always longs to place his father on the throne of his heart, if he is given a chance, but the fathers who covet that place enough to pay the price for it are too few.

A hard working mechanic said to a friend, "I made up my mind I would rather have a backache when my boys

were little than a heartache later on," and so no day's task was so heavy, no toil so exhausting that when he came home at night his two boys could not claim him. The cramped muscles would unlimber behind the bat, the tired limbs would forget their weariness in the jaunt that had been planned with father, and during the hours of freedom the three were chums in sports, in interests, in confidence. They say there is no more beautiful sight in that town today than two stalwart, manly fellows arm in arm with the father, who counts it the joy and pride of his life to have mounted the hero's throne in the hearts of his sons.

While boys always choose a man as their hero, girls may choose either the masculine or feminine character. They are still near enough Nature's heart to glory in wildness and abandon, and the subtle delicacy of true womanhood has not the charm for them now it will have later. Yet it is part of the priceless dower of motherhood to so share in the daughter's life through sympathy and

understanding that, to "be like mother" will embody all the aspirations of a girlish heart.

"THE READING CRAZE"

The flame of hero worship is fed from two sources—the life of some one near to the child and the passionate delight in reading which characterizes the years from about ten to fifteen and is especially marked from twelve to fourteen. The choice of books will naturally be governed by the strongest interests. We are not surprised, therefore, that every page must teem with life and chronicle some achievement, preferably in the physical realm, for in the thought of the junior, "Greater is he that taketh a city than he who ruleth his own spirit."

Toward the latter part of this period the sentimental novel, with all of its froth and perverted ideals of life, appeals to the girl, and it is an open question which is more pernicious, "Deadwood Dick and the Indians" or "Love at Sight."

When it is remembered that during

these years the desire for reading is so great that it will be satisfied, surreptitiously if not openly, that the heroes and heroines strengthen ideals of their own type in the soul of the child, that these are the years in which taste is being formed, not only in reading but in living, nurture again has a great task outlined. "What is the best way to keep a boy from eating green apples?" a prominent Sunday School worker often asks in a convention. The answer never varies: "Give him ripe ones to eat." The child who has plenty of well-selected, wholesome literature will have no appetite for the baneful. Biography of the heroic type, exploration, adventure and charming romances like the "Waverley Novels" will help to lay sane and pure foundations of character. The missionary boards are now putting out books as thrilling and stirring in their situations as any yellow-backed novel. These the children devour and the spiritual heroism makes its silent appeal along with the physical.

This delight in reading makes compara-

tively easy the formation of the habit of daily Bible reading. If the life is more than meat, then the time taken by the father or mother to select fascinating Bible biographies and stories, and tactfully to supervise the reading, is at least as wisely expended as that used in training a grape vine or sewing a lace edge on a ruffle. Is it not strange that there is such distorted perspective and false balance of values in regard to what is worth while? The cares of this world crowd out so many supreme things. Many a temptation in later life would have its antidote if the Holy Spirit could bring the needed Scripture to mind, but because some one substituted the lesser for the greater, solicitude for external appearance instead of inner furnishing, the Word is not there to be recalled.

HABIT FORMATION

The discussion of these marked characteristics of the life is given added import when we realize that these years are in the height of the habit forming

period. All through Early Childhood and Childhood every act has left its faint tracing upon the plastic cells of the brain, and some of the markings are deep ere now. Just as water will follow its channel rather than cut a new course, so activity will expend itself in the well-traced pathways unless prevented from so doing, and the same thought or stimulus will always tend to go out in the same action. No thinking is necessary upon these habitual acts which constitute "nine tenths of life"—they have become mechanical. Not only in the body does life acquire fixed habits, but also in the soul, in thinking, feeling and choosing.

The seriousness as well as the value of a habit lies in its tenacity. No harder task ever confronts a life than to break up one habit and substitute another after the brain cells grow hard. The process requires not only that activity be directed away from the pathway that irresistibly draws it, but at the same time a new groove be traced upon the hard, unyielding cells. The task is diffi-

cult beyond expression. This is why reformed men always have a hidden fear of lapsing into the former life. It is the call of the old pathway, traced so deeply in the brain.

A mature woman, brought up to the strictest Sabbath observance, came to believe that "the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath," and therefore essayed to act on that day according to her reason and judgment. The attempt was soon abandoned. "There is no pleasure in it," she said. "I am constantly fighting the old habits of my girlhood life, and they will not cease their call to me." This is what the wise king meant when he said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The whole tendency is to "ask for the old paths," that there "may be rest to the soul." A part of the miracle of conversion in later life appears in God's power to trace new pathways when the brain is hardened, and to keep life in them, moment by moment, against the tug of the old.

Three statements will crystallize the discussion. First: The years up to twelve present two conditions for habit formation —plastic brain cells and action easily secured—as no succeeding years present them.

Second: Habit formation, either right or wrong, is constantly going on, for every action leaves its impress and makes repetition easier.

Third: Right habits may be formed as easily as wrong, if the task is definitely undertaken.

Since the importance of these years is clearly evident, the method of habit formation may be briefly stated. First, secure the desired action; second, secure its successive repetition without a lapse, as far as possible.

We have already learned that action is the natural result of an aroused feeling; therefore, nurture will endeavor to make the act attractive and appealing where it can be done, that the cordial co-operation of the child may be had. Hero worship may aid here, the example in the home is imperative and

future considerations begin to carry weight. Encouragement, recognition, new interest and new motives will all contribute toward securing repetition, until unconsciously the action carries its own constraint and outer influence is unnecessary.

THE "GOLDEN MEMORY PERIOD"

During the years from about nine to fifteen memory is in its most glorious period for storing away. In early life a fact is retained chiefly through its impress on the soft brain cells, for the power of association is little developed. In later life a fact is retained almost wholly through association with other facts, for the cells grow hard and an imprint therefore is faint. In the "Golden Memory Period" the fact has the double hold of impress and association, for the cells are still plastic and associative powers are developed. The task and its haste are evident, for this dual condition never recurs.

The brain will now receive everything, the abstract, that which is not under-

stood, the uninteresting, as well as that which is pleasing. This is the drill period, when mechanical repetition will fix anything, regardless of the child's desire to learn, and full comprehension is unnecessary. It is also the period of verbal memory, and that which ought to be memorized exactly should be given now.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

If nurture has cared for the spiritual life of the child, he will probably desire during this period to publicly confess his love for Jesus Christ. Even if he has not been so nurtured, every condition in his life makes it easier now than it ever will be later to lead him to acceptance of Christ. Though there comes a great spiritual awakening in adolescence, there is at the same time more in the life to oppose the decision for Christ than in childhood. The Christian life has not the meaning for him that it will have later on, spiritual vision is not broad nor deep, but if the child genuinely loves the Savior and wants to use his energy

for Him, he is laying at the Master's feet all he has now to give, and if Christ accepts the gift, the church ought to accept the giver. There is no greater crime against childhood than to bar the doors to these babes in Christ, nor, assuredly, can any act bring keener pain to the Passionate Lover of little children, who said, "Let them come unto me, and forbid them not."

APPLICATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

Perhaps a resumé of the conditions which the Sunday School must meet in this period will make the situation more definite.

The child is increasingly independent and outspoken, but easily won by love and confidence. He responds to responsibility, craves recognition, glories in show and regalia, wants to know the truth about things. He is a hero worshipper, abounds with energy and considers it his inalienable right to have fun with his chums. He devours books and magazines, retains what he reads

and memorizes as never before. He is forming habits of life. He ought to be a sincere child Christian before he leaves the Junior department.

Manifestly, in dealing with this period, the problem of nurture must find a large part of its solution in the teacher himself. Three things must be vitally true of the one holding this responsible office: first, an abiding touch with God that shall mean Divine wisdom, moment by moment, for the exegencies of Junior work far outnumber the tread mill experiences; second, an understanding of and genuine sympathy with the life of the children; third, a personality that shall meet the conditions of hero worship. Some day the church will give to every boys' class, in this and succeeding periods, a trained Christian man to be hero first, and then teacher, for no boy aspires to be like a woman, no matter how much he may love her. But, though a woman may not reach up to a boy's ideals along physical lines, nor should she attempt it, there is abundant opportunity through outings, tramps, picnics

and genuine interest in their sports to touch even that side of the life of both boys and girls.

The social needs must be met through frequent class and department gatherings, preferably in the homes, for the habit of reverence in God's house will receive almost fatal counteraction in the average social gathering of this age held in the church. Organizations like the "Knights of King Arthur," for boys, and the "Sunshine Club," for girls, are to be highly commended because of their social features, their appeal to the love of uniform, password and secrets, to hero worship and to activity through the ideals of life and service they make concrete and alluring.

Discipline of these independent, outspoken boys and girls is easy if the teacher will only lay hold of the heart instead of the coat collar, but, alas, the latter method takes less time. The world holds nothing truer and sweeter than the love of a child at this age, free as it is from all affectation and policy, and it is there in every heart, awaiting the touch of

the teacher who can find the hidden spring. The contact on Sunday is not sufficient, however, to reveal it. The child must know through the letter, the call, the invitation to the teacher's home, the loving sympathy in his life and interests that the teacher wants him, not his Golden Text and offering, and in this knowledge the magic spring is found.

Besides the social life, the teacher should feel a responsibility in regard to what the children are reading. Papers like the Youth's Companion circulated among the members, suggestions as to books in the Sunday School or public library, books loaned to the children and questions as to their reading may save many a soul from the slimy trail of the serpent coiled in the dime novel.

A few suggestions may be added relative to the work in the School itself.

PLACE

The Juniors should have a separate department and place, for their work is distinct in character and methods from

the Primary and Intermediate departments. Maps and charts should be added to the equipment, individual and personally owned Bibles, and where they can be had, tables for each class.

ORGANIZATION

For two important reasons the department should be divided into classes and the teaching done by the teachers, presupposing they have risen to their privilege and are trained. First, the week-day shepherding becomes an increasingly serious matter as the child is broadening in his relationships, and no superintendent can give it alone. Second, the recitation must give large opportunity for individual work on the part of the pupil during the lesson, and this is impossible in a department taught as a whole.

PROGRAM

The program should give prominence to supplemental work taught largely through drills, including—during the Golden Memory Period—the Books of

the Bible, passages, chapters, facts concerning the Bible and training in its use, geography of the Holy Land, the catechism where used and the hymns of the church. Public recognition in badges, certificates and roll of honor will aid in securing the desired work along this and other lines.

Systematic and careful training in habits of Christian service ranks with the lesson in importance. Responsibilities in various committees through the week may be used to strengthen habits and utilize energy. Missionary heroes should be made as familiar to the children as their own personal friends, and there should be regular contributions to definite objects, not abstractions like "Missions" or "Benevolences."

Music of a martial type is greatly enjoyed by the children, also that suggesting action, but never the meditative, introspective sort. Great care should be taken to guard the voices from overstrain in loud singing, as irreparable damage may be done for all time to come.

THE LESSON

The Junior lesson should be prepared to meet the children's interest in facts and love of a hero. They are not ready yet for truth in the abstract—it must be seen in a person. Instead of the story, as in the Primary class, there must be a mingling of vivid word pictures by the teacher and question and answer. The children should not be told to "study the lesson," for they do not know how, but rather have assigned to them one definite thing to prepare for the recitation. Make use of their love of reading in this connection. Use energy and hold attention by means of pad and pencil, written answers in the books they are making on the current lessons, map drawing, looking up references and a stereoscope if possible. Time before the session and in the social gatherings of the class can be most fascinatingly and profitably used in making pulp and sand maps and models of Oriental objects.

Toward the latter part of this period, a questioning in regard to Divine things

may come, but a questioning unmixed with the doubt of later years. "And when He was twelve years old, * * * they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." With this desire to know reasons for belief comes the teacher's golden opportunity for strengthening the foundations of faith through history and the testimony of ancient monuments, where it can be adduced, through experience and through God's Word itself.

May nurture be so true to God and the life that the child shall leave his childhood and face the dawn of manhood as that One of old with the eager heart and heavenly vision, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

BETWEEN the quiet unfolding of childhood and the full development of maturity, there lies a period so fraught with danger and so filled with opportunity, that it is rightly considered life's crisis. A mistake at this point is more disastrous than at any other, while wisdom in dealing with the soul never has such rich reward.

In a general way, this period, known as Adolescence, extends with boys from about twelve to twenty-four, and with girls from about eleven to twenty-one, or from the beginning of manhood and womanhood to full maturing.

A study of the conditions that obtain during these years clearly reveals the reason for their crucial character.

1. It is an awakening time of new possibilities, physical, mental, moral and spiritual.

We are already familiar with the peril

and opportunity that attend the first stages of any development, because the future direction and strength of the possibility are then so largely determined. When we realize that the highest possibilities of the soul, as well as some of the lowest, are now unfolding, the gravity of the period is apparent.

The changes that come with the soul's awakening are so great, that often the youth becomes a stranger to those who know him best. Ideals, ambitions, feelings, thoughts and power only dimly, if ever, recognized in childhood take possession of the life. A new conception of God is born and a larger sense of responsibility to Him, to the neighbor and to the world. In these awakening possibilities are heard the siren voices of passion, society, wealth and fame and the clear call of self-sacrifice and duty, and the soul is bewildered, not knowing which to heed. Surely nurture is needed, for the choices of Adolescence are in all probability the choices of eternity.

2. These are the years of the greatest susceptibility to influence.

Everything that comes to the life now has an impelling force that it did not have in childhood. Life is in a state of unstable equilibrium, and a touch may move it. The influence of one book, of one friend, of one hasty word of criticism or passing word of encouragement may determine the future of a soul.

3. During this period habits become permanent.

The pathways traced through childhood and adolescence become settled, the cells gradually lose power to change, and by the close of Adolescence, character is practically determined, unless a Divine power "makes all things new."

4. The influence of heredity is strongly felt during the early part of Adolescence.

A child may be defrauded of his inheritance in stocks and bonds and estates, but the bequest of tendencies to which his parents and grandparents and the long line back have made him heir, can not be diverted.

There is danger of over-emphasizing the doctrine of heredity and lessening the sense of personal responsibility for con-

duct. There is also danger of minimizing it, and consequently failing to give the help that many a life needs in its effort to overcome an evil inheritance.

Heredity means simply a pull upon the life in a certain direction, because of the way those before have lived. It is easier to climb upward, if "the hands of twenty generations are reached down from the heights to help, than as if they reached up from below to drag down." But whatever the inherited tendencies, any life may have the "antithetic heredity," which is a part of its glorious inheritance in Jesus Christ.

5. This period contains the largest number of first commitments for crime.

Three coincident facts demand serious and careful consideration.

First. The greatest number of first commitments occur from twelve to sixteen.

Second. The greatest spiritual awakenings occur between twelve and sixteen.

Third. "Girls are most susceptible to influence for good or evil between eleven to seventeen, with the climax about four-

teen, and boys from twelve to nineteen, with the climax about sixteen." Is not the work of nurture plain?

6. During the early part of this period, by far the heaviest losses from church and Sunday School occur.

"While thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." Who was gone? A soul in its crisis, making eternal choices, easily influenced by a word, a look or a touch, in the grip of fierce temptations, but catching sight of Divine possibilities, needing help as at no time before or later, this is the soul that slipped away, in all probability, not to be brought back. You who let it slip, "How will you go up to your Father and the lad be not with you?"

In turning to a more detailed consideration of Adolescence, we find the wealth of material so far exceeding the limitations of our space, that the study must be selective, not analytic. Only those conditions in the life, therefore, which seem most imperative in their demands upon nurture will be chosen for discussion.

EARLY ADOLESCENCE

The first period of Adolescence covers about four years, approximately from twelve to sixteen with boys and eleven to fifteen with girls, and is perhaps the most trying of all to deal with.

The crisis in these years is a physical one, arising in connection with the functioning of new physical powers. Coincident with this the passions are born, bringing to many lives the severest of temptations. If ever a close intimacy is needed between father and son and mother and daughter, it is at this time of mystery and question, when the life does not understand itself nor the meaning of what God now gives it. The sacred confidence between parent and child is infinitely better than the best intended book upon the subject, which arouses further curiosity and kindles the imagination. When the home fails in nurture at this point, the Sunday School teacher must earnestly consider what of responsibility falls upon him.

The rapid physical growth of these years is often accompanied by awkward-

ness, due to the fact that the muscles are developing faster than the bones, making delicate adjustment impossible. There is painful sensitiveness over this, especially with boys, as hands and feet must be in the open, and they will easily construe any criticism or ridicule into a desire to be rid of their presence.

" * * * * And what if their feet,
Sent out of houses, sent into the street,
Should step round the corner and pause at the door
Where other boys' feet have paused often before;
Should pass through the gateway of glittering light,
Where jokes that are merry and songs that are bright
Ring out a warm welcome with flattering voice,
And temptingly say, "Here's a place for the boys!"
Ah, what if they should! What if your boy or mine
Should cross o'er the threshold which marks out the line
'Twixt virtue and vice, 'twixt pureness and sin,
And leave all his innocent boyhood within?
Ah, what if they should, because you and I,
While the days and the months and the years hurry by,

Are too busy with cares and with life's fleeting
toys
To make round our hearthstone a place for the
boys."

There is a sense of pressure and nervous excitement throughout the whole life, for the "invoice of energy" is not exhausted. Athletics afford physical relief, and slang, which is at its height from about thirteen to fifteen, offers somewhat of an emotional safety-valve. Experiences are never commonplace during this period, nor any individual ordinary. The strongest superlatives and most extravagant metaphors will scarcely do a situation adequate justice, but nurture can afford to be patient, for "this, too, will pass," and of itself, as life grows calmer.

The feverish excitement is not at all to the distaste of the adolescent but, on the contrary, he courts it. The "reading craze" is at its height in this period, and books which give "thrills" are sought by both boys and girls. There is increasing necessity of wise oversight in the choice of reading when the mind is so inflammable and easily led, and the fact that a

book is on the shelf of the Sunday School library is unhappily not always a guarantee against the need of further parental inspection.

The abounding energy of this period, when brought into conjunction with the enlarged vision of life, often gives rise to a restlessness and desire to leave school and go to work. This is augmented by the new money sense, which is strong about the age of fourteen, and leads to an effort to secure money to save as well as to spend. This desire ought to be met by a regular allowance or an opportunity for earning a stipulated sum. Its neglect is often the explanation for the breaking open of Sunday School banks or theft from household funds.

But even the satisfying of this desire will not allay restlessness, and many a school-room seat becomes vacant in the early teens. If, instead of the harsh measures so often used, the boy could know he had not only the loving sympathy but also the pride of his parents in this harbinger of approaching manhood; if, in place of force, he were given choice,

after all the considerations had been carefully weighed; if he could feel the confidence of father and mother that he would do the manly thing because he is almost a man, he would rarely fail to meet the issue, for "at no time in life will a human being respond so heartily if treated by older and wise people as if he were an equal." The result will be not only renewed zest in the erstwhile hated task, but a new bond between parents and son that will help to hold him true when greater crises come.

The strong appeal that sympathy and consideration now make to the adolescent is due to the new consciousness of self that has come to the life. It has many manifestations. There is a welcome external one that is evident in care for the personal appearance. The days of maternal solicitude for linen and ears come to an end in this period, and it is well, for the new standard of correctness is so high as to be unattainable by any one save the individual himself.

A new sense of pride in one's family and position appears, and an aristocracy based

on the accidents of birth succeeds the democracy of childhood. The girl who was sincerely thankful that she was not as others and assumed Pharisaic superiority because she had been born a Republican, an Allopath and, crown of all, a Baptist, lived in this period some years ago.

This consciousness of self and of approaching manhood and womanhood tends to make the life independent, and "any attempt to treat a child at Adolescence as an inferior is instantly fatal to good discipline." In this super-sensitive state, a public reproof, even in the home circle, carries with it humiliation beyond expression, and inevitably arouses resentment and not penitence. "At no time in life does a word of encouragement mean so much, or criticism leave such an ineffaceable scar." If those who touch a life through its unfolding only realized that what they sow of gentleness and consideration or of harshness and neglect when that life is defenceless and they are strong will be reaped when they in turn are without recourse and the child has be-

come a man, would there not be more tenderness and love in some homes? "For with the same measure that ye mete, withal, it shall be measured to you again."

Another condition of great import to nurture appears in the increasing power of the social feelings over the life. Society begins to fascinate, and the problem of a High School education is complicated with the problem of secret societies and school dances. Friends are chosen not so much for real worth as for clothes, position, attractive features or, where there is no interchange of confidences between parents and children, for sympathetic understanding. The longing for companionship is God given and must be fostered, else the youth will enter maturity a recluse and self-occupied, but nurture must carefully deal with it while life is in a state of flux. The only course to be at all considered is a substitutive, not prohibitory one, giving opportunity for social intercourse under proper conditions.

The development of the affectional side of the life during this period must be briefly noted.

Hero love and worship are more passionate than before. The object of admiration is usually some one outside of the home, often a favorite teacher who understands the heart of a boy and a girl. The patterning of the life after its ideal is most seriously undertaken, even to imitation of personal mannerisms. The privilege and responsibility of being the lode star of an unresisting, unpoised life is tremendous, for this influence overpowers all others at the time.

Strange manifestations of that which will later be love, holy and beautiful, between man and woman characterize these years. At first there is a mutual repulsion between the sexes. The boys are "so rough and horrid," and as for the girls—the masculine sentiment concerning them was voiced by one young cavalier in the words, "Oh, mush!" when his Sunday School class was asked if they would like to invite their "lady friends" to the coming class party.

But this stage does not continue, and soon nurture must deal with notes written by foolish maidens and the first glamour

of the great passion, "sicklied o'er" with callowness and sentimentality. There is no more perplexing problem in Adolescence than how to handle wisely this vernal manifestation of love.

Blessed is the home where there are congenial and sympathetic brothers and sisters, and wholesome and absorbing occupations. It is the vacuous, roaming soul which is a prey to the multi-temptations of this period. If the tastes and wishes of the young people can be satisfied in the home, and a hearty and natural companionship of the sexes be welcomed in this healthy environment, nurture will be bringing sanest measures to bear upon the situation.

Against this complex background, the necessity of a personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ stands out in startling relief. Though God comes to a soul in a marked way during Adolescence, nurture is taking a dangerous and often fatal risk in allowing life, as far as human effort can go, to enter its crisis without Him. The spiritual awakening of this period (to be considered in the succeeding

chapter) would seem to be God's call to larger service, rather than His first summons to "Follow Me."

With the Master's authority to let the children come, and with every condition in child life God prepared for their coming, there is no tenable position but belief that our Father meant every life to enter its period of "storm and stress," in step with Jesus Christ.

APPLICATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

Sunday School work during Adolescence and maturity lays less emphasis upon methods and equipment than in the earlier periods, and more emphasis on the personal relation between teacher and pupil. For this reason the preceding study, in so far as it interprets the lives of the boys and girls, applies directly to Sunday School work, for a sympathetic understanding is the key to the relationship. "There is no greater blessing that can come to a boy (or girl) at this age when he does not understand himself, than a good, strong teacher who under-

stands him, has faith in him, and will day by day lead him till he can walk alone." Far more than a pedagogue, the adolescent needs a friend in his Sunday School teacher, who shares his ambitions, knows his temptations, sympathizes with his successes and failures and, through it all, trusts him. This understanding and confidence, made long-suffering and tender by the love that never fails, will be a binding cord that can not be broken even by the most restless, wayward life.

Because of the close relationship to be sought between teacher and pupil, other things being equal, it is wise for a class of boys to be taught by a man, and girls by a woman. The counsel of one who has passed through the same experiences and known the same temptations and difficulties always comes with especial helpfulness. But the question of sex is not as vital as that of sympathy, nor the manner of previous experience as the manner of present love.

The new consciousness of distinction will make the class work difficult, if there is any marked difference in the social

standing of its members. The leader must be won to the right attitude in private, the appeal being based on personal feeling for the teacher and on the new ideals of relationship to others, which are beginning to take form.

An organization of the class in this and succeeding periods is necessary for the best work. It should place definite responsibilities upon each member, either as officer or committee-man, for habits of Christian service must be solicitously nurtured during these days.

Frequent social gatherings are very important. This is the age when the young people begin to think that "a Christian can not have any fun," and it rests with the church and Sunday School to prove to them the contrary. The only convincing proof is in experiencing the fact itself that the best times have a religious association, therefore a class party should be as carefully and as prayerfully planned as a Sunday School lesson.

As these years are included in the Golden Memory period, supplemental work of more advanced type should be

continued. Note books are helpful in amplifying and impressing the lesson, and brief essays upon pertinent topics add interest.

The teaching itself must deal more and more with the relationships of life. To the majority of young people, the Bible belongs to an uncertain and remote past. The goal of work in these unsettled years is to help them see how the Book solves all problems of present-day living, and how Jesus Christ meets every personal need of the life.

CHAPTER VIII

MIDDLE AND LATE ADOLESCENCE

THE crisis of adolescence may be said to culminate about the years from fifteen to seventeen with girls, and sixteen to eighteen with boys, or the period of Middle Adolescence. During these years the feelings and the imagination are a great storm center, largely because of the rapid development of the altruistic feelings, and the enlarged conception of life with the new ideals it has given.

Divine Wisdom in the order of the soul's unfolding can be seen nowhere more clearly than in connection with the growth of responsibility for another. There must first be the self feelings in the little child, to help him learn his own individuality. When that knowledge comes, his life must be related to other lives, hence the social feelings awaken, yet it is for his personal pleasure that contact with others is sought. But God's

plan for a life does not leave it self centered, and under His touch through these lives a sense of responsibility toward them begins to be felt, and the realization comes that "No man liveth unto himself." Ideals which make the good of others first, enter into conflict with childish ideals which made personal gain first. A new impulse to forget self in loving service confronts the old self seeking and self love. Then the truth that "No man can serve two masters," fastens itself upon the soul and decision waits between self and selflessness. In a struggle that often shakes a life to its foundations, the great choice is made and the soul yields itself servant to obey. Though a reversal of either choice is possible, it rarely occurs. This decision usually determines destiny.

A new meaning and value in early nurture is revealed in the light of this struggle. If love for Jesus Christ has grown through the years in the heart of the child and the youth, a decision that means fuller allegiance to Him and greater blessing to the world is assured.

If also during these years nurture has traced pathways of service, as an expression of child love to God and to others, habit adds the influence of its tendencies to the choice of ministering life, and offers channels already prepared for the outflow of sacrificial love.

The years preceding have not been utterly devoid of altruistic feeling, but adolescence presents marked difference in its manifestation, other than that of intensity.

In early life, the willingness to consider others before self was usually aroused through the influence of some one else; now the longing and constraint is within the individual himself. Again, in childhood, these feelings were called out only by some definite, concrete object; now they are stimulated by great ideas as well. Patriotism, humanity, suffering, duty, art and science have power to kindle flame on the altar of sacrifice. The more difficult the task suggested, the greater the power of its wooing. It is doubtful whether any Christian life ever passes through this period without considering

the ministry or the mission field, or whether every life does not at some moment long to go in quest of a Holy Grail.

The issues growing out of this crisis are too momentous to leave with even the wisest human nurture. God Himself must deal with the soul face to face, and lead it to this higher love and complete surrender.

In early years He revealed Himself as Creator, Heavenly Father and Friend to the loving, trusting heart of the little child. Now the time has come to make His glory pass before the soul. The marvels of creation in Nature, in constellation and atom, the infinities of eternity and space, the mysteries of life and death, His own holiness and justice and all the attributes of His matchless character, the unspeakable love that gave a Bethlehem and a Calvary to a sin sick race are revealed in new light and meaning, and the revelation is overwhelming. Existence that had been accepted without question now becomes complex and baffling. God is no longer

the gentle Lover and strong Protector of childhood days, but the great "I AM," and in the terrible crystal of His presence the soul is prostrate. With deep, added meaning the Cross stands out. Its message of salvation, not only to this soul conscious of its need, but to a sinning world, is heard anew; but with it comes the voice of the crucified and risen Lord, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

The answer cannot be returned in emotional love. It must be the love of all the heart, soul, mind and strength, born in self surrender. If this be the soul's response, the final triumph and glory of the life of self losing is pledged, not in the fluctuating efforts of a human will, but in the changeless strength of the Son of God.

It is not to be wondered at that when a soul is in the throes of such experiences as these, it is a time of storm and stress. Yet often the struggle is carried on alone, in silence, for life becomes secretive. The open frankness of childhood is gone, and

only to one in close sympathy will thoughts and feelings which sound foundation depths be revealed. It does not at all follow that because there is a physical tie between two lives, that there will be union of spirit in this time of need. The tragedy of so many homes is disclosed in the distance between father and son, and mother and daughter, that has widened almost imperceptibly through the years from lack of sympathy and confidence.

This close relationship which admits to the Holy Place of the soul in its crisis cannot be lightly cast away, and as easily renewed at will. It is a growth of the years, to be nurtured patiently, prayerfully, watchfully, steadily. A guest in the home of a busy physician noted the peculiarly tender and close relationship which existed between the father and his son, a splendid boy of about ten years of age. In answer to her comment upon it, the father said with moist eyes, "We are very close to one another. I know there is a time coming in his life when he will need a father as he has never

needed him before, and I mean to be ready. I never take a long drive in the country, that I do not have him excused from school to go with me. He wants to be a surgeon, so whenever I have to perform an operation, I always have him help me in some way. Up to this time there is nothing that weighs for a minute with him over against an opportunity to be with me, and I am trying to keep his life so close to mine that nothing can ever come between us." When that boy reaches his crisis and life closes up, his father will be shut inside with him. Is there any question as to the outcome, with a father and a father's God within?

If, in the busy cares of life, the intimacy that God intended in the home has been lost, it may be found again if the price of its recovery be paid, but it is often a dear price, payable in the coin of self humiliation, sacrifice and tears.

The need of this close touch with another is apparent in the unspeakable longing of the adolescent heart for understanding and sympathy, for appreciation and recognition, for help in choosing the

life work, and for love that is patient and deep. Perhaps the greatest longing of all is to be trusted, to feel the strong grip of a hand and hear a voice vibrant with encouragement and assurance say, "I know you can do it." If the greatest successes in reformatory work come to-day through loving confidence in the one who has started wrong, who can measure the energizing power of such confidence in a life already striving toward the best?

The pathetic side of this craving for confidence appears in the distrust of self which is almost universal at times during these years. A great wave of ambition and enthusiasm will sweep over the soul, and nothing seems too great to be attained, nor any obstacles unsurmountable. As suddenly it will recede, the ideals become impossible, the individual but an atom in God's great universe, the sky grows gray and hope dies out. In the vacillation between energy and indifference, enthusiasm and apathy, self loving and self hating, goodness and badness, confidence and despair, the ebb

and flow of the tide in the soul is revealed to understanding eyes.

For this fluctuation of purpose and failure to reach its high ideals, stern sentence is passed at the inner bar of judgment, and though the censure of another is resented, the soul bears great scars of flagellation, self inflicted. The standard of measurement by which the life tests itself and others is a new consciousness that there is absolute right and absolute wrong apart from all external coverings. The statements of others are examined, their actions are stripped of all veneer, profession and practice are balanced, and death sentence is passed upon the influence of any life that fails to meet the test. The compassion that remembers that we are but dust has no place in the heart as yet. Suffering will call out sympathy, but not failure to reach the mark. A life must ring true to God, true to its fellow men and true to the ideals conceived as belonging to it by these self-appointed judges, if it is to be of any help to them. It is therefore not a question whether the

professing Christian, be he parent, teacher or church member, can indulge in doubtful amusements or uncertain practices without injury to himself. It is rather, "Are these things included in the ideal of a Christian life, as it is held by those whom I want to touch?" If they who bear the name of Christ exemplified more completely the ideals by which they are measured, would there be so many who question the reality of divine things?

It is during the closing period of Adolescence, ending with young men about twenty-four and with young women about twenty-one, that doubt most frequently appears. It comes rather as a questioning and bewilderment to the Christian, and scepticism to the one who has had no experience of divine things. Spiritual truth is not accepted because another has said it is so, but each desires to know for himself the foundation upon which he stands, that he may have a reason for the hope that is in him. Investigation seems to show that at least two out of three pass through this period

of intellectual unrest, young men being in the majority.

Many causes contribute to this condition, but chief among them is the maturing strength of reason and will. The new power to think God's thoughts after Him, to trace cause and effect, to understand subtle relationships, intoxicates the soul. Everywhere in the world around, the pre-eminence of reason is acknowledged. The atmosphere of the university and the college which surrounds the favored young men and women is an atmosphere of scientific accuracy, where reason applies the tests. The world of business, of finance and of statecraft all bow to reason,—why not the spiritual world, and then by searching, the soul attempts to find out God. As in the wisdom of God divine things do not yield up their treasures in intellectual investigation but in revelation, the thick darkness gathers. Even that which had been once known by faith seems strange and unreal from this new view point. It is a critical time for a soul when it is learning that in one realm

reason does not go before, but faith. Any harshness or lack of sympathy on the part of another or evident disappointment in the life is very serious at this point. The will asserts itself under such measures and from the pliant attitude, "I cannot believe what I cannot explain," it takes the defiant attitude, "I will not believe what I cannot explain."

The marvelous dealing of our Lord with Thomas is a picture of His gracious dealing with every doubting heart, and ought to be the perpetual model for every one who attempts to give help at this time. When the Master stood before that disciple who said he would not believe unless he had the indubitable proof of a physical testing, He spoke no words of censure, no words of His pain that Thomas had been so long time with Him and yet did not know Him in faith. "Jesus said, 'Peace be unto you. Reach hither thy finger, and see My hands, and reach thither thy hand and put it into My side and be not faithless but believing,' and Thomas answered and said unto Him, 'My Lord and my God!' "

With like patience and infinite tenderness, the Spirit deals with the troubled heart today. He makes the past days with God live again in memory, if the life has known Him, and the soul can not deny in its reason the reality of what it has lived through in its experience. He uses every Christian life that can bear the search light as an irrefutable argument of the verity of the unseen. He brings the peace of God that passeth understanding, yet fills and thrills the soul as every service for Him is rendered even in the darkness. He calls through hard experience where reason can bring no comfort and the will is palsied, through the abiding unrest and longing of a heart that is feeling after God in its own way, instead of His, and through the drawing of childhood habits of love and trust. When at last, spent out with struggle and longing, the soul is willing to come back to the Heavenly Father as the little child who used to be, asking only to walk hand in His, in dark or light, a new consciousness dawns, clear, sure and absolute that, "Thus saith the Lord,"

is more than reason, and the triumphant song rings out, "I know whom I have believed, My Lord and My God!"

APPLICATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

The Sunday School touches a life just entering maturity at the focal point toward which all nurture has been tending. Enriched by years of absorption, with ideals defined and channels of expression traced, the soul faces an open door, bearing the inscript "Service." It is that each soul may enter the door and give back to a waiting world its best, that nurture has brooded and guarded through the years.

The great work of the Sunday School is to impel the soul to take this step, and taking it, say, "I am debtor." This can not be done through any system of methods, neither are narrow interests or unexacting tasks sufficient to arouse all that the soul has now to give. The great sweep and mighty force of world movements are alone adequate for a soul in touch with God and infinities.

There has never been a time in the history of Sunday School work when there were such far reaching, thrilling movements through which to appeal to manhood and womanhood as at the present time, and God's Hand is not hidden in the matter.

The Adult Bible Class movement, enlisting the greatest company of thinking men and women ever gathered for the study of the Word, is a call to open loyalty to the Book and to the church, that is winning recruits by the thousands.

The great Teacher Training movement, with its exacting standards and high ideals of preparation, is leading the choicest young people to seek the holy service of teaching.

The world encircling Missionary movements, the definite plan to give the gospel to every man, woman and child in this generation, the marvellous ingatherings already reported from the foreign field, the unparalleled opportunities to make richest investment of life in the waking Orient, these arouse the enthusiasm and

conviction which issue in prayers and gifts and pledge of Student Volunteers.

In our own land, the ethical awakening with its triumphs for Temperance and civic righteousness, the great conventions and conferences held for the Kingdom, the sweeping evangelistic campaigns with their trophies for Christ, and the new life stirring in the church, movements all, God initiated, God directed, throbbing with His Almighty power and revealing the oncoming of His triumph, these give the challenge and the inspiration to men and women, and response is coming in ever swelling volume, "Here am I, send me!"

It is the crowning mission of the Sunday School to relate these great interests to individual lives, and interpret for them the meaning in terms of love and service. To whom shall the task be given? To the teacher of transparent life, who can hold the world and the one in his heart, who can read the signs of the times and the signs of the soul, and who has nurtured with the Divine One through the years, to him shall be given God's crowning task with an Unfolding Life.

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